the weekly Standard

SEPTEMBER 11, 2000

$3.95

BASTARD NATION
IRA CARNAHAN

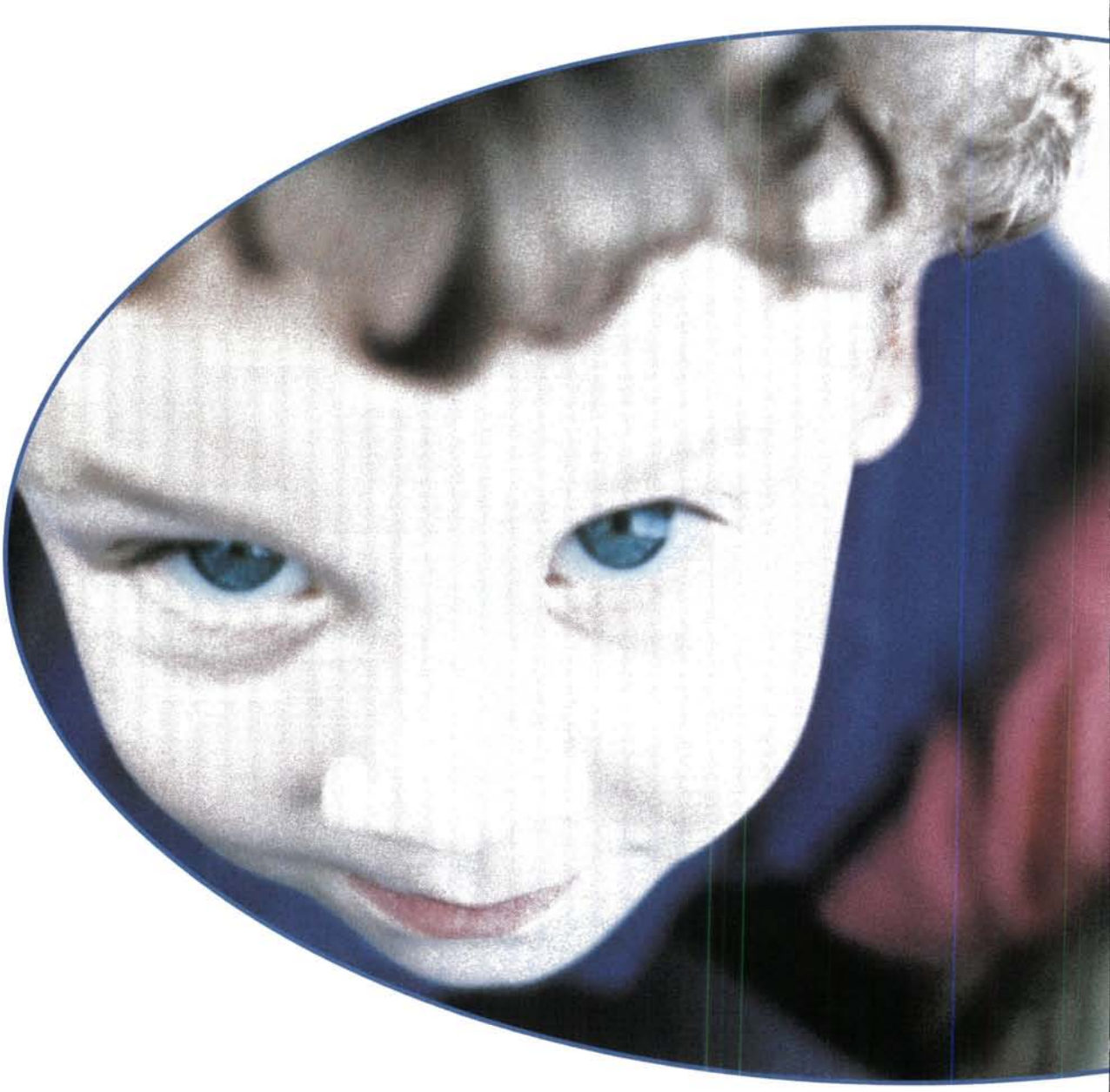
Faith Talk

Andrew Ferguson, Hillel Fradkin, Joel Schwartz, and the Editors on the new faith-based politics

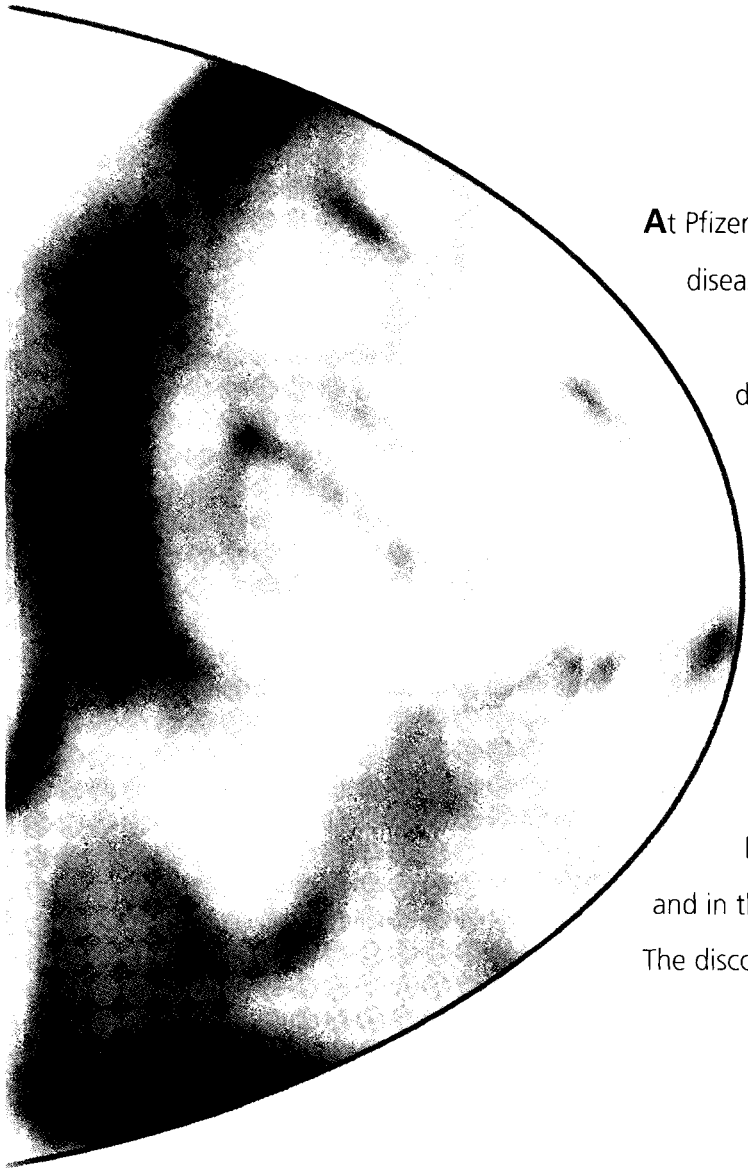
#BXNFMUD ****** 5-DIGIT 94301
#UNZ0555B096 1#302604 WK 004371
RON UNZ NOV 11 02 000031
371 BALN 000322
555 BRYANT ST 001
PALO ALTO CA 94301-1704

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To create a better world we've created an even better company.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



THE NEW PFIZER

At Pfizer, we're determined to find cures for the diseases that touch all our families, including aliments like depression, heart disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's, cancer, arthritis and HIV/AIDS. To accomplish this, Pfizer and Warner-Lambert have joined forces to assemble the largest pharmaceutical research team in the world. The new Pfizer has a scientific staff of 12,000 dedicated people looking for solutions to age-old problems. This year, we're budgeted to spend $4.7 billion on R&D, and in the coming years we'll invest even more. The discoveries we hope to make will help make your family's future even healthier.

Pfizer

Life is our life's work.

www.pfizer.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We're looking at the biggest demand for home financing in history. This is no time to run out of mortgage money.

In the next 10 years, 50 million families will be buying homes. More than 10 million for the first time. Fortunately, someone is already making the financial arrangements.

We're Freddie Mac. Congress created us to

maintain a stable supply of mortgage money for families all across America. We've done that by making home mortgages attractive to large investors. Pension funds, insurance companies and Wall Street investment firms prize them for their safety and liquidity.

Homeowners reap the benefits.

Even during the savings and loan crisis of the 80's, the refinance booms of the 90's and the worldwide credit crunch of 1998, funds for home mortgages have been consistently available.

And because of the efficiencies we create, homeowners save billions a year in mortgage interest. Which makes owning a home so affordable, a record 67% of Americans do.

Now more than 10 million families want to join them. And we want to make sure they can. So we're marketing our investments overseas. Bringing money from investors in London, Hong Kong, Paris and Singapore to homebuyers in Silver Spring, Fresno, Peoria and Poughkeepsie.

After all, when you're financing this many dreams, are the ends of the earth really too far to go?

www.freddiemac.com

Freddie Mac

We Open Doors®

©2000 Freddie Mac

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contents

September 11, 2000 • Volume 5, Number 48

4 Scrapbook . . . . *Ben & Jerry's, election forecasts, and more.*

6 Casual . . . . . *It's all Greek to Matthew Rees.*

8 Correspondence . . . . . *On "LUVMSL," reparations, etc.*

11 Editorials . . . . . *Faith Talk; Bush Goes "Negative"*

Articles

14 Christianity, Clinton Style *The confessor in chief wows an audience of evangelicals.* . . . . . BY ANDREW FERGUSON

16 Bracing Lessons for Bush *Compassionate conservatism before compassionate conservatism was cool.* . . BY JOEL SCHWARTZ

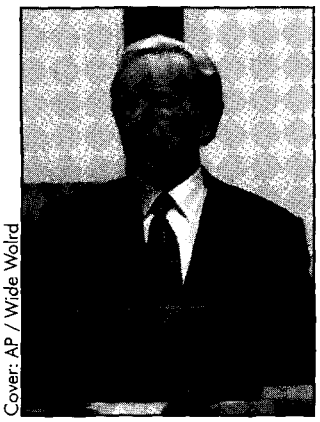
18 The Not So Great Debate Debate *The Bush and Gore campaigns engage in a ritual squabble.* . . . . . BY TUCKER CARLSON

20 The Beginning of the Endgame *Get ready for one last showdown between Congress and Clinton.* . . . BY MATTHEW REES

Features

22 The Rise of "Bastard Nation" *And the threat to adoption.* . . . . . BY IRA CARNAHAN

25 Quota King *Clinton defies the Senate by appointing Bill Lann Lee. Will the Democrats pay?* . . . . . BY ROGER CLEGG



Cover: AP / Wide World

Books & Arts

29 Faith in Politics
Joseph Lieberman explains himself. . . . . . BY HILLEL FRADKIN

33 Banning Flannery
Down and out in Louisiana. . . . . . BY ROD DREHER

35 Present at the Creation
How the Chess brothers invented rock 'n' roll. . . . . . BY DANIEL WATTENBERG

40 Parody . . . . . *Another shocking Bush videotape.*

William Kristol, *Editor and Publisher* **Fred Barnes,** *Executive Editor*
David Tell, *Opinion Editor* **David Brooks, Andrew Ferguson,** *Senior Editors* **Richard Starr, Claudia Winkler,** *Managing Editors*
J. Bottum, *Books & Arts Editor* **Christopher Caldwell,** *Senior Writer* **Victorino Matus, David Skinner,** *Associate Editors*
Tucker Carlson, Matt Labash, Matthew Rees, *Staff Writers* **Kent Bain,** *Art Director*
Katherine Rybak Torres, *Assistant Art Director* **Jonathan V. Last,** *Reporter* **Jennifer Kabbany, Edmund Walsh,** *Editorial Assistants*
John J. Dilulio Jr., Joseph Epstein, David Frum, David Gelernter, Brit Hume,
Robert Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, P. J. O'Rourke, John Podhoretz, Irwin M. Stelzer, *Contributing Editors*
David H. Bass, *Deputy Publisher* **Polly Coreth,** *Business Manager*
Nicholas H.B. Swezey, *Advertising & Marketing Manager* **John L. Mackall,** *Advertising Sales Manager* **Lauren Trotta Husted,** *Circulation Director*
Doris Ridley, Carolyn Wimmer, *Executive Assistants* **Tina Winston,** *Accounting*
Ian Slatter, *Special Projects* **Catherine Titus, Davida Weinberger,** *Staff Assistants*

the weekly Standard

THE WEEKLY STANDARD (ISSN 1083-3013) is published weekly (except the second week in April, the second week in July, the last week in August, and the first week in January) by News America Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153; changes of address to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Yearly subscriptions, $78.00. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-303-776-3605 for subscription inquiries. Visa/MasterCard payment accepted. Cover price, $3.95. Back issues, $3.95 (includes postage and handling). Send manuscripts and letters to the editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. THE WEEKLY STANDARD Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is 1-202-293-4900. Advertising Production: Call Ian Slatter 1-202-496-3354. Copyright 2000, News America Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in THE WEEKLY STANDARD may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. THE WEEKLY STANDARD is a trademark of News America Incorporated.

BPA INTERNATIONAL

www.weeklystandard.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

World's Best Vanilla Sludge

Not so long ago, Ben & Jerry's, the famous Vermont-based cult movement, made a very special announcement about the ice cream it manufactures as an offering to the Earth Spirit. "World's Best Vanilla," Ben & Jerry's proclaimed, would henceforth be sold only in containers made from unbleached paper. Bleached paper is almost always contaminated with dioxin, you see. And dioxin, Ben & Jerry's marketing material confidently asserted, causes cancer, genetic and reproductive defects, and learning disorders. Matter of fact, "the only safe level of dioxin exposure is no exposure at all," so . . . there would be no more bleach in the vanilla package, not a drop, no siree.

Then along came Michael Gough and Steven Milloy. Gough is a scientist and the former director of a federal advisory panel on Agent Orange, the dioxin-laden defoliant used during the Vietnam War. Milloy is editor of the excellent debunkery website *Junkscience.com*. The two men were curious about what Ben & Jerry's might now be selling *inside* its much-ballyhooed bleach-free paper. So they bought a pint of "World's Best Vanilla" and had it tested at an independent lab. The result: Eighty picograms of dioxin per single serving of ice cream.

Is that a lot? Yes and no. No, Gough and Milloy were quick to point out, there isn't actually a drop of clear evidence that dioxin—even in much higher concentrations than Ben & Jerry's contains—causes anything more serious than temporary acne. But, they went on, yes, the ice cream *does* include quite a lot of the junk. If, that is, you remain superstitiously concerned about the alarmist warnings of . . . well, for example, the people who make that ice cream. And the Environmental Protection Agency. EPA has established a "safe dose" level of daily human dioxin consumption, beyond which, the agency cautions, people run a serious, increased risk of cancer. A couple of scoops of "World's Best Vanilla" have 200 times this much dioxin. If you've been eating it regularly and you're reading THE SCRAPBOOK—well, you're a miracle of medicine.

Several weeks ago, at a conference on dioxin in Monterey, California, Gough and Milloy updated their findings, further tweaking Ben & Jerry's for its hypocrisy about environmental responsibility and food safety. In the San Francisco Bay area, there's a petroleum refinery long targeted by the EPA and local environmentalists because the wastewater it releases contains dioxin in microscopic quantities. But an average-size helping of "World's Best Vanilla," Gough and Milloy reported, contains at least 2,200 times more dioxin than each liter of effluent the controversial refinery is permitted to discharge.

Surely Al Gore will want to make this "toxic" dessert a major issue in his fall campaign? ♦

The Real Drug News

Last Thursday, the Clinton administration released the national drug use survey for 1999 and heralded a decline in teen drug use. Drug Czar Barry McCaffrey called it "extremely encouraging news." HHS secretary Donna Shalala proclaimed: "We've not only turned the corner—we're heading for home plate."

The basis for these remarks was the finding that current (monthly) use of illicit drugs had dipped, from 9.9 to 9.0 percent for 12-17 year olds. In fact, this change is not statistically significant, as Shalala was forced to admit during press questions at the announcement. And by focusing on kids as young as 12, the administration press releases also mask the fact that drug use is dramatically higher among older kids, with surveys showing that 54.7 percent of high school seniors in 1999 had used an illicit drug by graduation. This number has actually increased in six out of the past seven years; the number of seniors who have experimented with drugs is now higher than the comparable rate for the drug-addled Class of '75.

McCaffrey and Shalala were not asked to explain the apparent failure of the administration's much heralded, and taxpayer-funded, $200 million media campaign. Far from a triumph, the administration is actually facing the full collapse of its drug policy. Use is at high levels, and the president has been forced to "deliver" a $1.3 billion military aid package to Colombia, because cocaine and heroin coming from that country are out of control and financing a serious threat to democracy in the hemisphere. Maybe the media can recycle some of the revenues from the administration's anti-drug ad campaign into reporting on its claims of success. ♦

The Postdicters Are Back

In the May 26 *Washington Post*, Robert Kaiser trotted out several of the finest minds in the academic business of election forecasting to announce Al Gore's certain victory this fall over George W. Bush. "It's not even going to be close," the University of Iowa's Michael Lewis-Beck was quoted as saying. But as Ira Carnahan pointed out at the time in these pages—joined by skeptical pieces in *Slate* and the *National Journal*—the election forecasters have a questionable track record. Their computer models

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

can "predict" past elections but not future ones. Lewis-Beck, for instance, correctly foresaw Clinton's 1996 win, but in 1992 he predicted a Bush victory.

Nonetheless, an unabashed Kaiser was at it again last week, treating *Post* readers to pro-Gore soothsaying from academic clairvoyants in town for the American Political Science Association's annual meeting. Among Kaiser's savants: Thomas M. Holbrook of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Like the others, Holbrooke's model made its bones by correctly "postdicting" previous elections. Unfortunately, his model has correctly called only three of the five close elections since 1952. James Campbell of the University of Buffalo also pops up in Kaiser's retread. His model, one 1993 analysis determined, contained an 18-point margin of error—big enough to drive a third party through. Also touted is the work of Christopher Wlezien, who in 1996 was only two-tenths of a point too low in his prediction that Clinton would win with 54.5 percent of the two-party vote. But, as the *Post* itself noted in 1996, Wlezien fine-tuned his numbers several times in the months leading up to the election.

THE SCRAPBOOK, in the same spirit, will issue its scientific predictions after hearing the early exit polls on Nov. 7. Meanwhile, the Bush campaign may have worries, but the political scientists' forecasts shouldn't be among them. ♦

Wedded Bliss

Newsflash to politicians: before the economy, environment, even education, come two-parent families. This was the message from a new Wirthlin poll released last week by the Alliance for Marriage, which touts itself as a "non-partisan, multicultural marriage coalition." According to the survey findings, 92 percent of Americans believe the country can move forward only if families and family values are strengthened.

One-third of American children are raised without dads—leading to youth crime, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, and welfare, says director Matt Daniels. Advisory board member Rev. Walter Fauntroy, a former D.C. delegate who organized the March on Washington for Martin Luther King Jr., says behind the youth violence and hostility in the black community are "young boys who need their fathers."

The group's poll found that 87 percent of Americans want businesses to offer home-based work options and flexible hours, 78 percent support requiring counseling to married couples with children before a divorce is granted, and 76 percent back tax cuts for married couples with children. Fauntroy sums it up: "I love my daughter, and when she turns 13, and some guy says to her, 'Baby, I *love* you,' she'll say, 'I hear that everyday, what else is on your mind?'" ♦

Help Wanted

Contributing editor Charles Krauthammer seeks a research assistant. Send résumé to 1225 19th St., NW, Suite 620, Washington, DC 20036, or e-mail CkrauRA@aol.com ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Casual

Modern Greek

My wife and I are in Athens, and all we want to eat is the Greek equivalent of a hamburger, a luscious lamb gyro. Without realizing it, we've selected a hopelessly American-themed restaurant, called "Jackson," and when I ask our waitress whether they serve gyros—carefully pronouncing it the Greek way, *yero*—she looks at me puzzled and says no. We order two Coronas instead—no Greek beer to be had here, thank you.

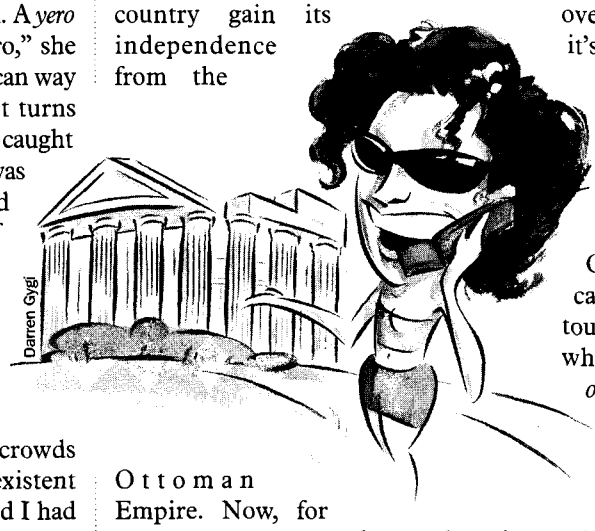
A while later a Greek-American waitress from Oregon comes over and asks us what it was we'd wanted. A *yero* I tell her. "Oh, you mean a gyro," she says, pronouncing it the American way (jy-row, rhymes with Cairo). It turns out the U.S. pronunciation has caught on here, and our first waitress was baffled when she thought we'd asked for *euros,* the currency of the European Union.

It was a rare disappointment of our recent stay in Greece. To be sure, my expectations were low. When I'd visited ten years ago, the place had a Third World feel: sweaty crowds everywhere and poor to non-existent budget lodging—my friends and I had to sleep on the beach in Mykonos. During a white-knuckle ferry ride to Santorini, I was convinced our boat would capsize in the turbulent seas.

What I missed on that trip but discovered on this one is Greece's split personality: part Balkan, part Western European; torn over whether to obsess about the past or shed it. The Greek mind, I learned, is restless with ancient grievances and modern ambitions.

This time, I was traveling with journalists, and we met with bureaucrats, think-tank types, and politicians lined up by the American Journalism Foundation. Our meetings usually began with an offer of fresh orange juice. Then our hosts, representatives of the forward-looking Greece, would make soothing noises about their country's traditional enemy. Greece and Turkey, they assured us, engage in joint military exercises and help each other out after natural disasters. This was the European Greece, enlightened and resentment-free.

But it doesn't take long to discover the limits of this goodwill. "Turkey is never far from our minds," noted the centrist Athens daily *Kathimerini* during our visit. And how could it be otherwise? The Turks controlled Greece for centuries. Only in 1830 did the country gain its independence from the Ottoman Empire. Now, for every announcement of a new dawn in Greek-Turkish relations, you hear the fall of Constantinople to the Turks invoked at least once: Every Greek knows the fateful moment—11:25 A.M. on Tuesday, May 29, 1453. To this day, Greeks consider Tuesdays unlucky and disdain to use the modern name for Constantinople, Istanbul.


Darren Gygi

The modernizers notwithstanding, the Greek perspective on the world remains shaped by the past. There's even a word for this syndrome, *progonoplexia*, which can be translated roughly as "ancestoritis." One result is that Greeks are considerably chattier when talking about long-ago events than events of our own time.

When I lived in Brussels five years ago, I ate lunch occasionally with a Greek diplomat. Our conversations were dull when the subject was contemporary Greece. But that changed as soon as I asked him to explain, say, why Greece vehemently insists that its northern neighbor be referred to by any name but "Macedonia" (leading to that country's hideous new appellation, "FYROM," for Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). Out would pour an impassioned tutorial starting with Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great, and culminating in a detailed comparison of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires, lubricated by generously flowing wine and illustrated with maps of the Balkans sketched on placemats.

But unless you're a journalist or happen to be in Greece at a time of massive protests (like those last year over NATO's bombing of Belgrade), it's easy to miss this living history. A stroll through the Kolonaki neighborhood of Athens, with its whiff of Paris, or up the winding stone streets of Oia, on sun-drenched Santorini, is more likely to show the visitor the other, 21st-century Greece: cell phones and Internet cafés, the sound of English ubiquitous (Frenchmen beware), and everywhere women dressed in *Erin Brockovich*-style miniskirts and halter tops. On TV, there's even a Greek *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*.

Absent more Balkan wars—admittedly an iffy proposition—this lust for all things modern is bound to grow. Yet the potential for reviving the old obsessions is ever-present, and there will always be internal struggles over how fiercely to cling to tradition. During our stay, a fight was brewing over whether the identity cards that all Greeks carry should continue to state their religion.

Some Greeks, at least, can laugh about it all. One political cartoonist, asked a few years back whether his country had a future, replied, "We have a past. You can't ask for everything."

Matthew Rees

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MAKE 2 FREE CUSTOM JAZZ CDs

Start with the music shown here and for thousands more jazz and classical selections visit us at

www.musicmaker.com/freecds

ROMANTIC GUITAR
Earl Klugh
I'll See You Again 1208
John Scofield & Pat Metheny
Quiet Rising 1209
Stanley Jordan
The Lady In My Life 1385
Dwight Sills
Desert Skies 1212
Al Di Meola July 1210
Jim Hall
In A Sentimental Mood 1386
Wes Montgomery
Lois Ann 1382

FREE JAZZ AND THE AVANT-GARDE
Ornette Coleman
The Riddle 1318
Cecil Taylor Steps 1325
Dewey Redman
O'Besso 1326
Eric Dolphy
Out To Lunch 1320
Sun Ra
Stardust For Tomorrow 1321
Archie Shepp
Sonny's Back 1322
Lester Bowie
Rope-A-Dope 1323
Paul Bley Contrary 1324

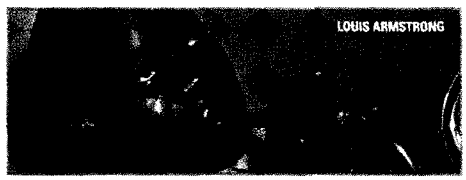
JAZZ FOR A LAZY AFTERNOON
Dave Grusin Maria 1220
Eliane Elias An Up Dawn 1383
Chick Corea
Samba Yantra 1222
Miles Davis Yesterdays 1223
Herbie Hancock
Watermelon Man 1225
Everette Harp Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology) 1226
Diana Krall
As Long As I Live 1227
Joe Henderson
Lazy Afternoon 1228

THE JAZZ TITANS
Miles Davis Move 1173
Sonny Rollins Tune Up 1174
Thelonious Monk
Straight No Chaser 1175
John Coltrane Blue Train 1176
Charlie Parker & Dizzy Gillespie
A Night In Tunisia* 1177
Duke Ellington It Don't Mean A Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing) 1178
Coleman Hawkins Someone To Watch Over Me 1179
Herbie Hancock
Canteloupe Island 1180
Julian 'Cannonball' Adderley
Mercy, Mercy, Mercy 1181

VIVA DIVAS!
Diana Krall Jimmie 1185
Diana Krall
Frim Fram Sauce 1186
Billie Holiday
Them There Eyes 1187
Ella Fitzgerald
Try A Little Tenderness, I Got It Bad...(medley) 1188
Sarah Vaughan
Time After Time 1390
Dinah Washington
Romance In The Dark 1190
Lena Horne Mood Indigo* 1191
Nancy Wilson
On Green Dolphin Street 1192
Betty Carter
My Favorite Things 1193
Cassandra Wilson
Strange Fruit 1376
Carmen McRae Dindi 1391

ON THE COOL SIDE
Miles Davis Jeru 1327
Gerry Mulligan with Chet Baker
My Funny Valentine 1328
Cal Tjader
Mambo Sangria 1329
Lennie Tristano Wow 1330
Lee Konitz/Brad Mehldau/ Charlie Haden
The Song Is You 1331
Jimmy Giuffre Iranic 1332
June Christy
Day-Dream 1333
Stan Getz
Pennies From Heaven* 1387
Jim Hall Chelsea Bridge* 1335

LOUIS ARMSTRONG CENTENNIAL
Basin Street Blues 1245
Mahogany Hall Stomp 1392
Just Squeeze Me (But Please Don't Tease Me) 1393
C'est Si Bon 1394
A Kiss To Build
A Dream On* 1395
Honeysuckle Rose 1247
Jeepers Creepers 1250



I'll Be Glad When You're Dead, You Rascal You 1248
I've Got The World On A String 1249
Lazy River 1252

THE ART OF THE BALLAD
Billie Holiday
Lover Man 1377
Grant Green
Idle Moments 1257
Lee Morgan Ceora 1259
Benny Green
Summer Nights 1295
Ranee Lee
Summer Knows 1296
Art Farmer
Like Someone In Love 1261
Eric Dolphy Something Sweet Something Tender 1262
Lee Konitz/Charlie Haden/ Brad Mehldau
Body and Soul 1263
Nancy Wilson Lush Life 1294

TOP BRASS
Lee Morgan
The Rumproller 1267
Donald Byrd Fuego 1268
Kenny Dorham
El Matador 1269
Freddie Hubbard
Hubtones 1270
Miles Davis Woody'n You 1271
Miles Davis Donna 1272
Clifford Brown Cookin' 1273
Dizzy Gillespie
Oop Bop Sh'Bam 1396
Art Farmer Mox Nix 1275
Chet Baker Imagination 1290
Art Farmer Blue Bossa* 1291
Ornette Coleman
Morning Song* 1292

SMOOTH GROOVES
Pieces of a Dream
Mt. Airy Groove 1276
Dave Grusin Tonight 1277
Najee Sweet Love 1278
Dwight Sills Dreamin' 1279
Medeski, Martin & Wood
Nocturne 1280
John Scofield I'll Take Les 1281
Fattburger Imagine That 1282
Bobbi Humphrey
Harlem River Drive 1283
Brian Hughes Dusk 1289
George Howard
Poet 1284
Ronnie Laws
Solid Ground 1384

THE BOP ERA
Fats Navarro
Lady Bird 1303
Dizzy Gillespie & Charlie Parker
Groovin' High 1299
Dexter Gordon
Love For Sale 1300
Thelonious Monk
Round Midnight 1301
Charlie Parker Ornithology 1302
Bud Powell Trio
Bouncing With Bud 1304
Sonny Stitt I Got Rhythm 1306
John Coltrane
Moment's Notice 1298

SWINGTIME!
Duke Ellington
Take The 'A' Train 1308
Benny Goodman
Jersey Bounce 1309
Count Basie
One O'Clock Jump 1311
Buddy Rich
I Cover The Waterfront 1312
Harry James I've Heard That Song Before 1313
Stan Kenton
It's Alright With Me 1314
Glenn Miller In The Mood 1315
Artie Shaw What Is This Thing Called Love 1316

LATE NIGHT SLOW AND EASY
Dexter Gordon Don't Explain 1198
Chet Baker Stella By Starlight 1196
Carmen McRae
The Man I Love 1379
Johnny Hartman
Summertime 1378
Milt Jackson
I Should Care 1200
Earl Klugh Catherine 1380
Dave Koz Cara's Theme 1381
Everette Harp
Norwegian Lilies 1203
Janis Siegel (Love Is) The Tender Trap 1204

SUMMER SAXOPHONE
Charlie Parker
Now's The Time* 1232
John Coltrane
Like Someone In Love 1233
George Howard
Family Affair 1234
Sonny Rollins
Sonnymoon For Two* 1235
Najee Najee's Theme 1236
Julian 'Cannonball' Adderley
Country Preacher 1238
Stan Getz
Don't Worry About Me 1239
Joe Lovano I've Got You Under My Skin 1240
David Sanborn & George Duke
Wives And Lovers* 1241
Dave Liebman Group
New Vista 1242

*live recording

music maker.com

1 Choose the songs that you like
2 Sequence the songs and personalize each disc with a title you create
3 Return the coupon and receive your first 2 custom CDs FREE (even get a bonus CD at half price: $4.95)

Select from thousands of original recordings on such prestigious labels as Blue Note, Riverside, Pacific Jazz and more. There's no obligation to buy more. Our regular price is $9.95 for the first 5 songs, plus $1.00 for each additional song (there is a charge of 20c a minute for any song over 5 minutes)

Visit us online to download FREE songs

www.MUSICMAKER.COM/freecds

Selections for downloads are different than those shown here.
© 2006 Music Maker.com Inc. 12950 Park Ridge Blvd. Suite 50 Reston VA 20191

Order your FREE custom CDs today!

MAIL TO: MUSICMAKER.COM, P.O. BOX 8610, RESTON, VA 20191, OR GO TO WWW.MUSICMAKER.COM/FREECDS

Choose 5 songs per CD, plus add a personalized message/title (UP TO 30 CHARACTERS INCLUDING SPACES)

FREE CD #1 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
TITLE

FREE CD #2 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
TITLE

YES! I WANT A BONUS CD AT HALF PRICE ($4.95) WITH THE FOLLOWING SONGS:
1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
TITLE

I LIKE JAZZ, BUT I ALSO LISTEN TO:
☐ CLASSICAL ☐ BROADWAY
☐ NEW AGE ☐ LATIN
☐ POP ☐ NOSTALGIA
☐ WORLD ☐ CLASSIC ROCK

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED: If you are not satisfied for any reason, return CD within 30 days for prompt replacement or refund.

PAYMENT METHOD: ☐ BILL ME CHARGE IT TO MY CREDIT CARD: ☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ DISCOVER ☐ AMEX
ACCOUNT NO. EXP. DATE /

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY STATE ZIP
TELEPHONE ( ) E-MAIL

We reserve the right to ask for additional information or to reject any order. Offer limited to new customers only. A shipping and handling fee on each CD and applicable state and local taxes if any will be added.

music maker.com

09-WSD

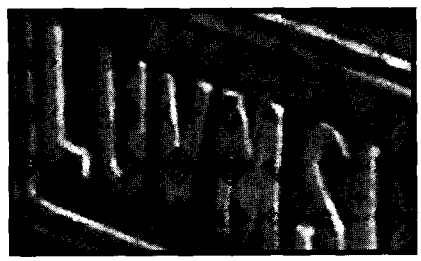
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

An Eye for Detail

As a relatively new subscriber to The Weekly Standard I have found myself anxiously awaiting the arrival of each issue. In the past, I have leapt to the articles without ever giving the multicolored caricatured covers much more than a passing ho-hum. But this week I learned something, or at least I think I learned something.

Without falling too heavily on the "a picture is worth a thousand words" cliché, I could not help but notice the not-so-subliminal messages conveyed by the Aug. 21, 2000, cover. Boy did you guys knock it out of the park with the vanity plate. Those six letters say as much about those characters in the car as any six letters of the alphabet regardless of accent, tone, arrangement, or use. Having been stopped dead in my tracks by the vanity plate I decided this issue could not be fully appreciated unless I scoured the cover for more messages, both subtle and direct.

Tell me, was the green Cadillac supposed to represent Gore's support for the Kyoto accords since they would require a reduction in emissions levels to those of the 1970s? Was the Cadillac supposed to imply that the best vehicle

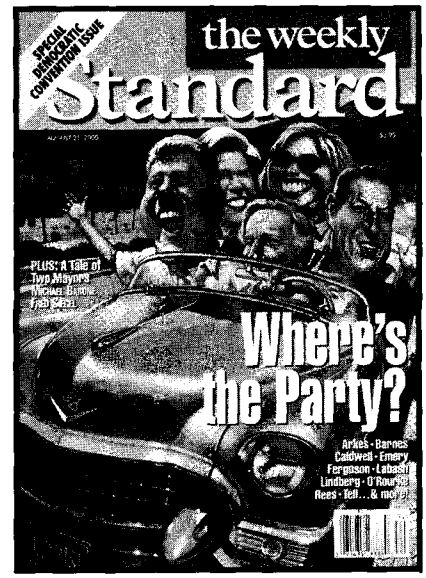


in political terms would be the party of Clinton and company? Was Joe Lieberman's despondent look supposed to be reflective of his real mood because of the sacrifice he's making? Were the dark glasses Hillary was sporting an indication that she thinks she's too cool even for this group of wannabes? Was Al's strained smile supposed to indicate just how much he would like to dump the Clintons? Was Tipper's admiring smile directed at Hillary because she secretly covets the attention Hillary receives? Was the smoke from the tailpipe an indication that, true to Democratic politics, Gore's campaign is just an over-hyped smoke-and-mirrors production? Or am I just hyperventilating?

Carl W. Watson
Demorest, GA

Standing for Election

Fred Barnes's article on "The Bush Republicans" (Aug. 21) raises some pressing questions. If the Republican party is no longer willing to take a principled stand against issues such as quotas, illegal immigration, bilingual education, term limits, or the



reduction of the federal bureaucracy, then what, exactly, does the party stand for?

I became a Republican because "the Democratic party left me," as President Reagan said. Little did I know that the Republican party actually wanted to be more like the Democratic party. Don't get me wrong. I want to win as much as any Republican. But I don't want a candidate and a party willing to sacrifice principled stands for the sake of winning an election. Leaving the issue of affirmative action to the courts, for example, is exactly what the Democrats want. Do the Bushies think the liberal judicial activists sitting on the federal bench will actually overturn this reverse racism?

Is this "diversity" and "inclusion" foolishness just for the consumption of the liberal media? Why can't any professional politician or pundit understand that taking a principled stand against these and other issues is not extremism?

Bill Matwijiw
Chicago, IL

Gore Is the Problem

David Tell's "The Meaning of Lieberman" (Aug. 21) voices the frustration among Republican policy and political types watching the incredible lightness of being "Joe" unfold. U-turns on "principles" and other hypocrisy in the name of being on the ticket must be addressed only in the most oblique fashion—say, by praising his erstwhile conservative positions and wishing him a speedy recovery.

Not the least of these frustrations involves the height of irony in Lieberman's being used to distance Al Gore from President Clinton. The argument of our Democratic counterparts in pursuit of this angle is that Lieberman's selection is an assurance that the Clinton White House shenanigans won't go on in a Gore White House.

Okay, point ceded. But is that not also an admission that with a different vice president, the Clinton White House shenanigans wouldn't have gone on in the Clinton White House? Bite my tongue.

Christopher C. Horner
Alexandria, VA

Money for Nothing

I guess reparations make as much sense as most of what John Conyers says (Sam Goldman, "The Reparations Bandwagon," Aug. 21). People who didn't do anything wrong to anyone are expected to pay reparations to people who didn't have anything wrong done to them because of things that happened long before either group was alive involving people who have been dead for decades. Who do I see about getting reparations for the shabby way my ancestors were treated when they

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were chased into central Europe a few millennia ago?

If Conyers really wants to balance the scales of justice, he ought to figure out who are the present-day descendants of the black Africans who enslaved his people in the first place, then sold his ancestors to white buyers. He can make a far better case against them than he can against the descendants of the people who freed the slaves.

MARK LANDSBAUM
Diamond Bar, CA

SAM GOLDMAN'S ARTICLE covers most of my objections to the reparations movement, but doesn't state them anywhere near strongly enough. I have severe doubts about compensating the descendants of World War II internees, or even the descendants of victims of the Holocaust. Surely justice does not have a sell-by date. But is money given to great-great-grandchildren justice? The dead are gone, and I can't help but think that their descendants aren't entitled to profit by their fore-parents' suffering.

My ancestors never owned a slave, nor profited by slavery (unless you want to try to create a really complicated case for indirect profit), and didn't even get to this continent until after the Civil War. And what of those whose ancestors fought to end slavery? Shall we exempt them? How about southern whites who opposed slavery?

There are no living survivors of slavery. No one can directly claim to have either profited or lost by the institution. There are wrongs done every day on the basis of race. Why don't we deal with those, and forget about what happened to, and was perpetrated by, the long dead?

DIANNA DEELEY
Fremont, CA

HEDGING OUR BETS

YOUR AUGUST 21 ISSUE left me a little ideologically seasick. According to Christopher Caldwell ("An Orthodox Liberal"), Gore-Lieberman is "considerably to the left of the Clinton-Gore ticket that Democrats rode to triumph in 1992 and 1996." But wait: Tod Lindberg ("Yes, There Is a Third Way") says, au contraire, that the "Gore-Lieberman ticket [is] slightly to the right of Clinton-Gore."

Maybe by the time President Bush is sworn in they will have figured it out.

TIMOTHY FURNISH
Alpharetta, GA

THE WEEKLY STANDARD
welcomes letters to the editor.
Letters will be edited for length and clarity and must include the writer's name, address, and phone number.
All letters should be addressed:
Correspondence Editor
THE WEEKLY STANDARD
1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505
Washington, DC 20036.
Or e-mail: Editor@Weeklystandard.com.

EDITED AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY ALVARO DE SILVA

THE LAST LETTERS OF THOMAS MORE

"Thomas More's last letters combine moving eloquence with grand dilemmas of conscience in face of tyranny. He refused to take Henry VIII's required oath, but also to declare wrong others who did. . . . This fine edition provides essential explanatory notes for today's readers."
—HENRY CHADWICK

"Any More enthusiast will treasure this collection beyond measure, as it offers a clear window onto the soul of one of history's noblest figures."
—*LIBRARY JOURNAL*

"This edition of Thomas More's last letters is an appealing and deeply moving volume, edited in a way that clarifies the political and religious situation during More's final days in the Tower of London. It will be of great interest to all those concerned with More's stalwart refusal to bow to the demands of Henry VIII."
—LOUIS L. MARTZ

ISBN 0-8028-3886-3 · 222 pages · hardcover · $20.00

At your bookstore,
or call 800-253-7521
Fax: 616-459-6540
www.eerdmans.com

0044
WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Another good example of Fannie Mae at work.

Everywhere you look, you can see it. Working families who never thought they'd be able to live the dream of homeownership are finding their dreams can come true.

Because at Fannie Mae we have a mission. To knock down barriers and lower costs so that more working families can live the dream of homeownership.

You see, we believe that when more Americans have safe places to call home, it strengthens families, communities, and our nation as a whole.

By working with our mortgage lender partners and other housing leaders, we've helped more people own homes than at any time in our nation's history. And more dreams have come true. Something we're very proud of.

FannieMae
www.fanniemae.com

©2000, Fannie Mae. All rights reserved.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the weekly Standard

Faith Talk

The nation's liberty, George Washington pointed out more than two hundred years ago, cannot be maintained without morality, and morality, in turn, largely rests on religion. But over the last four decades, the forces of secularism—with considerable aid from America's judges—have won innumerable battles in the war to banish religion from the nation's public life.

Of course, there has been resistance. Thinkers from Richard John Neuhaus in *The Naked Public Square* to Stephen Carter in *The Culture of Disbelief* have fought back, waging an unfashionable fight on behalf of public religion in America—not so much for the sake of religion, as for the sake of America.

Now it seems the resistance has succeeded. It looks like victory when the Democrats, seeking a vice-presidential candidate to help them distance themselves from the dishonor of President Clinton, light on an observant Jew as the most obvious exemplar of morality.

It looks like victory when the Anti-Defamation League, an organization founded to fight discrimination against Jews, is forced to the confusion of censuring that candidate because he's been speaking aloud about his Judaism.

It looks like victory when both the Republican and Democratic presidential nominees speak openly of their Christian faith, and the Democratic vice-presidential nominee stands in a church pulpit, as Senator Lieberman did on Sunday, August 27, to call upon the American people to "renew the dedication of our nation and ourselves to God and God's purpose."

It looks like victory when the editorial page of the *New York Times*, in its attempt to persuade Senator Lieberman to abandon his religious rhetoric, is reduced to the dubious expedient of trying to correct George Washington on the meaning of America's founding.

The question is: What exactly has been won? After all, at the moment the most obvious victor is Al Gore. The Democrats are "going to take back God this time," a campaign official claimed earlier this year—and, by God, they have. From the Democratic party's point of view, Joe Lieberman's fight with the Anti-Defamation League could not have been better timed. Strongly religious people have tended to vote Republican in recent years, precisely because they have seen the Democratic party as captive to a radically secularist ideology. But how can they not respond sympathetically when they observe a believer in God attacked for mentioning his belief? Almost nothing the Democrats do can really put at risk the votes of the secularists, and with Lieberman, they may have successfully weakened the Republicans' hold on the religious. In other words, the Lieberman nomination has allowed Gore to accomplish a pair of nicely judged triangulations: appearing to censure the behavior of the president with whom Gore would otherwise be indelibly associated, and appearing to distance himself from the secularist radicals in his own party.

Still, the Republicans have resources with which to respond, and the passive silence of George W. Bush since the Democratic convention is astonishing. So—Bush ought to be asking—is Gore going to select judges who will permit the religious "reawakening" and "rededication" for which his running mate now calls? The secularization of public life has occurred not by the will of the American people, but by the will of the American judiciary. A handful of cases in recent years have, by a series of close votes in the Supreme Court, slightly reversed the trend. The next president will likely have several appointments to the Supreme Court, and will name hundreds of judges to the lower federal courts. Won't Gore select judicial nominees who will uphold *his* views on abortion, affirmative action, vouchers, and a secular public square—all the standard Democratic litmus tests? How can that possibly allow the return of public religion that Lieberman desires?

Indeed, won't Gore be unlikely even to staff his own administration with religion-friendly types? Clinton, one remembers, ran as a new sort of Democratic moderate, but his administration quickly silted up with all the old, familiar leftists—because the Democrats don't actually have anyone, except Lieberman, who is willing to run the risk of alienating important Democratic constituencies.

For that matter, they don't really have Joe Lieberman. As the price of ascending to the top of his party, Lieberman has retreated on affirmative action, on Hollywood, on school vouchers. His Mario Cuomo-esque position on partial-birth abortion—personally opposed, but publicly in favor—remains a throwback to the most naked days of the naked public square. And he was never as bold as he appeared on holding President Clinton responsible or accountable for his actions—a terribly weighty matter to which he, of course, no longer ever alludes.

Indeed, Lieberman's religious discourse stretched sufficiently in Detroit last week to compare President Clinton to Moses: "You might say the Red Sea finally parted, and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more Americans than ever before walked through behind President Bill Clinton." And in Chicago the next day, he declared any deviation from the Democrats' health care plan a violation of God's Law: "Isn't Medicare coverage of prescription drugs really about the values of the Fifth Commandment: Honor your father and mother?"

We're not sure what this is, except perhaps a new political idiom—call it "faith talk"—that seeks to dress up political partisanship in the language of personal religious emotion.

Even before Senator Lieberman's vision of a Moses-like Bill Clinton, the recent revival of public religion had seen its share of strange moments. Asked last spring to name the political philosopher who most influenced him, George W. Bush answered "Jesus, . . . because he changed my heart." Almost unprompted, Vice President Gore explained that he solves policy questions by asking himself, "What would Jesus do?" President Clinton—ah, well, President Clinton remains the master: the creator of an extraordinary circle in which actual sins become the occasion for a public display of private religious feeling that apparently abolishes any need to pay a penalty for those sins.

Much of this is not religion, but religiosity; not righteousness, but self-righteousness; not piety, but pietism. If this is what victory looks like, then the return of religion to public life seems better than the absence only by the smallest of margins.

But that small margin is important. In the long decades spent chasing religion from America's public life, a kind of amnesia settled in, and we forgot what public religion actually is. We forgot that the Bible is neither a public-policy position paper nor a mine for inconsequential rhetoric, but a faith-founding document that informs the practice of public life. We forgot that the public display of religion is not the wrapping of the mantle of private religion—the public glow of personal sanctity—around a partisan position that a politician would hold even if he weren't religious. We forgot that it is still less the Clintonian wrapping of the mantle of private religious faith around the politician himself.

Nonetheless, and despite it all, the acknowledged role of religion in public life grows stronger, and it will not now be reversed. The radical secularists have been routed. Change has come. The task now is to ensure that it is change for the better.

—J. Bottum and William Kristol

Bush Goes "Negative"

At the end of last week, by general consensus here in the capital, the presidential campaign turned "negative"—and it was George W. Bush who did the deed. The awkward way Bush crossed this line and the reaction to his move are eloquent testimony to a central weakness of current American politics. No, we are not here referring to the "mean-spiritedness" of Washington's "tone"; something worse than that lately plagues us. Indeed, the country's fetishistic revulsion over mean-spiritedness has actually helped incubate and disguise the real disease.

First came word, two weekends ago, that Bush had ordered the last-minute cancellation of a television ad about Vice President Gore. The kiboshed ad was built around a clip from an interview with Gore on NBC's *Meet the Press*. During which clip, asked whether President Clinton had uttered even a single untruth "in the last two years," Gore stammered out an embarrassed but nevertheless very stubborn denial. The vice president, the gist of this commercial was to have been, is a man who will say just about anything to protect his political interests.

No problem there, we'd say. No problem even with the fact that the *Meet the Press* interview in question took place in 1994, by which time Bill Clinton had already unrolled the first few hundred in his record string of presidential lies. Even *then*, in other words, Gore's defense of Clinton's honesty was craven and weird.

But the would-be ad nowhere identified the date of the NBC broadcast in question, and thus might have implied that Gore's weirdness was recent. That is to say, unsuspecting viewers might have got the impression that even now the veep cannot bring himself to admit that Clinton spoke a falsehood or two during his Lewinsky troubles. That impression would be fair, of course, at least where the president's really important, i.e. perjurious, falsehoods are concerned. But be that as it may: For using a six-year-old Gore quotation to make this point, Bush would surely have been whacked hard by a chorus of Democrats and media types, and it wasn't worth such grief, so he wisely killed the ad.

All of which backing and forthing immediately set Washington tongues a-clucking about "disarray" in Austin, Texas. And just a few days later, the clucking reached its current, near-deafening pitch. Because last Wednesday, during an interview with CNN, Bush reiterated his pledge to avoid "personally attacking" his opponent. And then, barely 24 hours later, it was revealed that Bush had already approved *another* ad, now on the air in 17 states—this one challenging Al Gore's credibility, most strikingly by refer-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ence to the vice president's notorious "community outreach" appearance at a Los Angeles Buddhist temple in 1996.

Tut, tut, tut. Bush has broken his word. He has unsheathed the terrible sword of "personal destruction," which is, after all "what's wrong with our politics." For shame.

It is ridiculous, this complaint. It is ridiculous that the cry of foul comes loudest from the Gore campaign and the Democratic National Committee, whose most recent "theme of the week" is the canard that George W. Bush has knowingly withheld necessary medical treatment from desperately ill poor children in Texas—and whose own television ads have been similarly savaging Bush for months on end. It is ridiculous that Gore's admirers pretend annoyance at the suggestion that such stuff might be beyond the pale. Their charge about the Texas health care system concerns Medicaid, a substantive and therefore legitimate "issue," they huffily explain, whereas Bush's mention of the Hsi Lai Temple is a "personal" and therefore off-limits assault on Al Gore's character. It is further ridiculous that such a bogus distinction has already won widespread and automatic acceptance among Washington's professional commentariat.

And finally, it is ridiculous—no, it is terribly depressing—that the general public, too, is likely to concede to Team Gore the cherished victim's role in this controversy, and cast the bulk of blame on Bush for the campaign's inevitable "descent" into the "mud." The country is likely to react this way because it has become deeply confused about a principle that, just eight short years ago, was still universally considered indispensable to the very idea of American constitutionalism. To wit: that a public man's willingness to bow before the law and answer for his actions, quickly, honestly, and always—thus, his readiness to accept custodial responsibility for orderly and transparent government—speaks as nothing else does to his character. And therefore, that a public man's character is certainly an "issue" that begs for inspection. Properly conceived, you might even say, character is the paramount issue.

We have not grown confused about this by accident. We have been taught our confusion, on purpose, by the Clinton-Gore administration.

Do you doubt the lesson is real and explicit? Consider an unusually self-conscious but otherwise typical student. There is a chilling passage in Bob Woodward's book *Shadow* which describes how Mark Fabiani, the White House's top Lewinsky-era scandal spinner, came to take that job. Clinton *capo* Harold Ickes offered it to him. Fabiani did not want it. So Ickes threatened to destroy his career if he refused. Fabiani thought this coercion "despicable." But, he later explained to Woodward, he chose to succumb anyway—because he was persuaded by Ickes's argument that "the president *needs* to be reelected" so as to effect the policies Fabiani believed correct.

Fabiani's conclusion in sharper relief: The boss and his henchmen may be fully "despicable," but if their agenda is the right one, then it renders that purely "personal" ugliness trivial—and anyone who shares the agenda can, even *should*, deny the truth of his leader's character. The better to forestall a victory by the opposing team, you see. The better to *win*.

Who was Mark Fabiani, in those days, but a perfect doppelgänger for the American majority that sustained Bill Clinton in office during his impeachment trial—despite that majority's clear understanding, consistently expressed in the polls, that the president was guilty of every felony charged against him? And who is Mark Fabiani these days? Why, naturally enough, he is a senior aide on the presidential campaign of Albert Gore Jr.

Since 1993, Al Gore has loyally served a president who felt positively entitled to break the established rules; entitled to lie about the matter whenever he was caught; and entitled, worst, to twist the entire executive branch into a private legal defense committee—all purely by dint of his politics. Among Clinton's critics have been some Republicans. And that fact alone, the president has over and over again insisted, is enough to disprove the criticism.

Now comes time to recognize the servant as his master's spawn: Gore is like this too. His ludicrously exaggerated support for Clinton during the Lewinsky scandal? There were Republicans involved, Gore has blithely explained. Impeachment was simply a "partisan effort in Congress."

Or this, a few years back: "The public needed to be informed as to why this pending Republican agenda was not good for the country." So the Democratic party *had* to finance an expensive national advertising effort during the 1996 campaign. And Gore *had* to make those fund-raising phone calls from his White House office. And his party *had* to vacuum up every available contribution it could find. Including some illegal ones—like those generated by Gore's visit to the Hsi Lai Temple.

George W. Bush is justified in reminding the country about the temple and justified in doing so now rather than later. More justified, for that matter, than perhaps he realizes. Last week's Bush ad cites Gore's temple visit as an instance of hypocrisy, an event that puts paid to the vice president's call for campaign finance reform. It is that, to be sure. And yet, hypocrisy is merely a garden-variety political sin. How much graver the sins at issue here: broken laws and lies and, underneath, an outright corruption of our government and politics. Al Gore is a man who sees nothing wrong—something, instead, to be almost admired—in his willingness to breach the limits of traditional honor so as to achieve his party's legislative goals. And further his career.

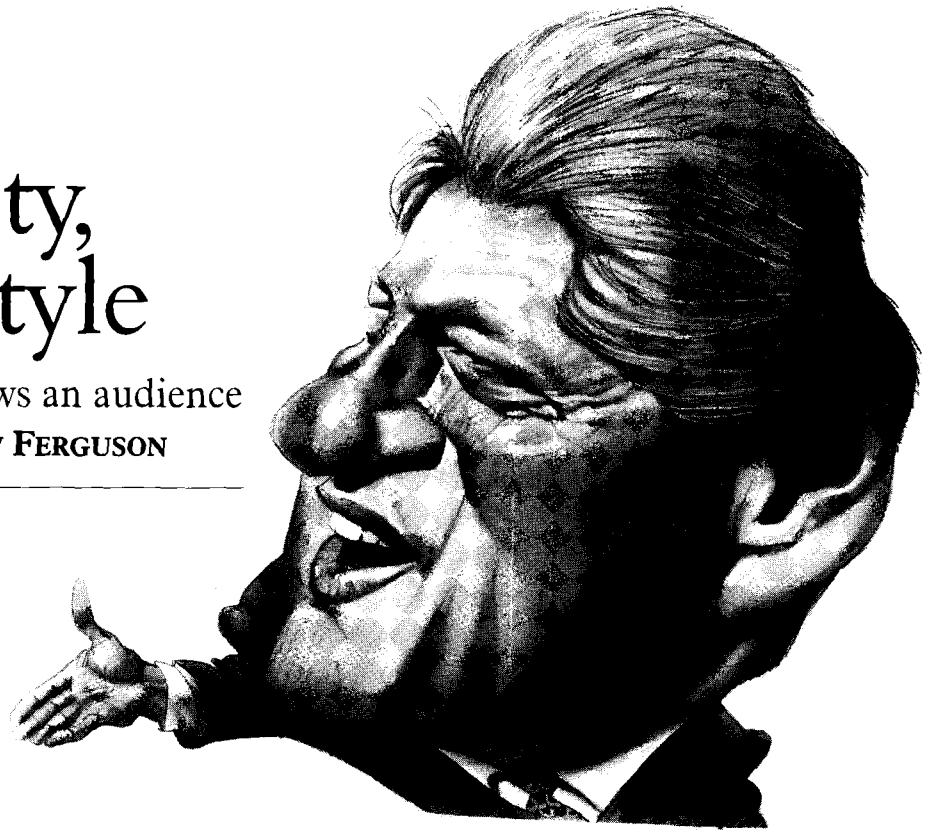
This is Gore's true "character." What could be more serious a campaign "issue" than that?

—David Tell, for the Editors

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Christianity, Clinton Style

The confessor in chief wows an audience of evangelicals. BY ANDREW FERGUSON



THE RECENT BICKERING over the role of religion in presidential politics—brought on by a sudden and unexpected eruption of Bible-thumping from Sen. Joseph Lieberman—has of course alarmed the enlightened classes. "I was appalled," read a typical letter last week to the *Washington Post*. "Mr. Lieberman's comments were insulting to ethical and moral nontheists . . . " And it is not only they who should worry. By happy coincidence, a mere fortnight before Sen. Lieberman began tooting his hymns to an "awesome God," the country was treated to a pristine example of what happens when politicians and preachers get their roles mixed up. The example should have been enough to give all of us pause—moral nontheists, immoral theists, unethical pantheists, situational monists, everybody.

For almost eight years now, from the beginning of his presidency, Bill Clinton has been periodically visited at the White House by Bill Hybels, pastor of the Willow Creek Community Church in Barrington, Illinois, thirty miles outside Chicago. Willow Creek is one of the fabulously successful "megachurches" that have bloomed in the last twenty years, providing its 20,000 parishioners with every conceivable amenity short of dry-cleaning. Within its 155-acre compound, there are theaters, parenting seminars, youth groups, marriage counseling, retail outlets, libraries, treatment programs for sundry addictions, film and recording studios, musical entertainments, individual therapeutic services, rehearsal rooms, dramatic productions, and so on. There's even Bible study.

Among evangelicals, Hybels is universally admired for his entrepreneurial vim. His friendship with the president has been more controversial.

Rather than deliver prepared remarks, the president offered answers to questions gently lobbed his way by his host.

(Clinton himself, among evangelicals, is not at all controversial; everybody hates him.) According to news reports Hybels had offered the president an open invitation to visit Willow Creek whenever the spirit moved him, and at last the spirit did so, four days before the president was scheduled to open the Democratic National Convention with a much-anticipated speech. The occasion for Clinton's trip to Willow Creek was Hybels's annual Leadership Summit, at which 5,000 evangelical pastors gather, with several thousand more hooked in by satellite, to hear presentations from corporate CEOs, management consultants, and facilitators of all kinds.

When the president suddenly accepted Hybels's long-standing invitation, everyone with a license to practice punditry smelled a rat. The consensus was that Clinton would use the Willow Creek audience to reiterate his apologies for the Lewinsky scandal, absolve Al Gore of any peripheral sleaze, and thereby relieve himself of the "necessity" of doing the same a few days later at the convention. (You may wonder who decided that Clinton "needed" to do this at all, but you're not a pundit.) The news coverage of Clinton's appearance reinforced this storyline. One soundbite in particular—"Surely no fair-minded person would blame [Al Gore] for any mistake that I made"—aired on all the TV news shows. But far more interesting, especially in light of Lieberman's subsequent homilies, is the broader message of the event. It was the work of a master. By the time Clinton left the stage at Willow Creek, his audience of hostile evangelicals was in tears.

Rather than deliver prepared remarks, the president offered answers to questions gently lobbed his way by his host. This allowed him to open

Andrew Ferguson is a senior editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

Illustration by Thomas Fluharty

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with a chummy anecdote about Buddy, his canine castrato, and then move on to a smattering of flattery for Hybels, with a reference to how often they pray together and with thanks for the same, which in turn allowed him to make indirect references to how hard he, the president, works and how strenuous his job is, making decisions "under circumstances which are unimaginably difficult." (No president has ever worked harder at explaining how hard he works.) "It can crowd out all that other stuff inside you that keeps you centered and growing and whole," the president said.

"Centered," "whole," even "stuff" —these are New Age terms of art familiar to the sort of evangelical pastors who attend leadership seminars and listen with rapt attention to management facilitators. But the president's identification with his audience extended beyond a simple mastery of catch phrases. He showed this especially when, without further preamble, he plunged into a discussion of the scandal that was on everyone's mind—without, literally, discussing it at all.

Asked to describe "where you're at spiritually," Clinton gave a rambling response. "I feel much more at peace than I used to," he said. The humiliation of "what I went through" had brought him to "a different place."

"I'm now in the second year of a process of trying to totally rebuild my life from a terrible mistake I made. . . . I wake up every day, no matter what anybody says or what goes wrong or whatever, with this overwhelming sense of gratitude, because it may be that if I hadn't been knocked down in the way I was and forced to come to grips with what I've done, and the consequences of it, in such an awful way, I might not ever had to really deal with it 100 percent."

The ordeal of Lewinsky had thus been a learning process, as the phrase goes—a thinly disguised gift for the president, a rough patch in his personal journey of the spirit, a chance to squeeze lemonade from the lemons of life. It was, to use another current phrase, all about him. And hey: He's doing great.

Key to his newly won self-understanding, the president said, was the famous apology he offered up at a prayer breakfast in September 1998, a few weeks after his disastrous prime-time address to the nation admitting "an inappropriate relationship with Ms. Lewinsky."

"I finally realized," the president told his Willow Creek audience, "that I'd never be all right unless I stood up there and said what I did, and said it was wrong, and apologized for it."

Hybels himself is full of admiration for that apology, in which Clinton quoted St. Paul, the fifty-first Psalm, and the Yom Kippur liturgy, and announced somberly, "I have sinned." Even so, Hybels pointed out, "there's a whole bunch of people who just continue to believe you never came clean."

Now there's a reason people continue to believe this, and one explores it at great risk of seeming pedantic, but it is crucial to understanding how the president has mastered the use of religion for political purposes—how he has managed publicly to conflate his responsibilities as a government official with his obligations as a practicing Christian.

The essence of the confusion is this: No one knows what precisely Bill Clinton means when he refers to the "terrible mistake I made." He sometimes calls it a "personal mistake." But it is always singular, and even when he apologizes for it, it remains nameless. The mistake cannot be the multiple instances of lying under oath, first before a judge and then before a grand jury, since the president continues to deny that these lies occurred. The mistake cannot be suborning perjury, because he denies that too. Ditto his summoning of the vast resources of the presidency to frustrate a civil lawsuit and a criminal investigation. Besides, these wouldn't have been merely mistakes but also criminal acts.

Was he apologizing, then, for adultery? Apparently so, although his remarks seemed less like an apology than a confession. And here his command of Protestant etiquette rescues

Think TANK
With BEN WATTENBERG

This Week On Think Tank:

Paul Volcker, the Fed, and the New Economy

WASHINGTON	WETA	6:30pm Sept. 9
NEW YORK	WNET	9:00am Sept. 9
LOS ANGELES	KCET	3:00pm Sept. 9
CHICAGO	WYCC	10:30pm Sept. 7

Support for Think Tank is provided by the Smith Richardson Foundation, the Lynde and Harry Bradley foundation, the John M. Olin Foundation, and the Bernard & Irene Schwartz Foundation.

PBS

THE PBS PROGRAM ON IDEAS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him. An apology is an expression of regret to those who've been hurt. A confession of sin is properly made privately, either to a minister of some sort or to the "community of faith." It is not meant to be a public act. But Clinton managed to mix the two up—so that the apology looks like a confession of sin and the confession looks like an apology, and he winds up looking contrite, though no one knows why for sure. Has he apologized for betraying his oath of office, or confessed to diddling the intern? Either way, his audience is in a bind. For as the theologian Robert Jewett wrote after Clinton's apology, "By placing his remarks in the language of confession of sins, Mr. Clinton placed an obligation on believers to accept him at his word and to offer immediate forgiveness."

It didn't work right away, of course, at least among evangelicals, the great majority of whom, as I say, have no use for Clinton. But it undeniably worked with the Willow Creek Leadership Summit. "When the interview [with Hybels] was done," wrote one who was there, Richard Mouw, there was "another standing ovation—except this time people all around me were wiping tears away. I saw this through my own tears." It helps that at Willow Creek, as at many of the megachurches, the brand of Christianity on tap is highly therapeutic, suffused with the language of self-absorption and personal growth that is the president's primary mode of speech.

As Sen. Lieberman and his critics know, politicians have always used religion—borrowed its imagery and idiom and watered it down for their own advantage. The Deists of the country's founding drained Calvinism of its metaphysics and invoked the stern moralism that remained. Bill Clinton has done something similar, though less admirable, using the evangelical Protestantism of our day to muddle the discussion of his own public transgressions. Which leads you to wonder: Maybe the problem isn't politicians who exploit religion, but the kind of religion that politicians find it easy to exploit. ♦

Bracing Lessons for Bush

Compassionate conservatism before compassionate conservatism was cool. BY JOEL SCHWARTZ

WHAT DOES IT MEAN to be a compassionate conservative? George W. Bush sought to answer that question, both in his acceptance speech in Philadelphia and (more extensively) in an address in Indianapolis on July 22, 1999. As a compassionate conservative, he proposes to "speak without apology for the values that . . . help overcome poverty." He praises the work of charities that make moral demands on the poor, treating them "as moral individuals, with responsibilities and duties, not as wards or clients or dependents or numbers." Governor Bush particularly supports faith-based charities, which "have shown their ability to save and change lives."

The laudable aim of compassionate conservatism is to promote self-reliance. In effect its contention is that the moral buck must stop with the poor if the economic bucks are to start flowing toward them. Significantly, that contention was also the hallmark of much nineteenth-century antipoverty policy, which was largely developed by administrators of charities. Thus, compassionate conservatism has a history, which offers helpful guidance to its advocates today.

Charles Loring Brace (1826-1890) was one of the preeminent charity workers of the nineteenth century. In 1853 he founded New York's Children's Aid Society (still very much in existence) to assist the vagrant youths, many of them orphans, who roamed the city's streets. Brace offered housing (for which youths paid, out of their earnings as bootblacks or newsboys) and industrial training to his charges, as well as the opportunity to begin new lives with adoptive families in the country.

In many respects Brace's convictions were akin to those of the leaders of faith-based charities hailed by Governor Bush today. Brace was an ordained Congregationalist minister. He believed that charity was useless if it did not "touch habits of life and the inner forces which form character." "The higher education of character" that constitutes Christianity must be given to the poor, to ensure their self-reliance; if it was, "only seldom will either alms or punishment be needed." Not surprisingly, Brace advocated what is now called charitable choice—state support of private, faith-based efforts that serve a secular purpose. If "a private charity is accomplishing a public work of great value, which is not and perhaps cannot be accomplished by purely public institutions," its efforts should be supported by the state, regardless of whether "the charity is 'sectarian' or not."

But Brace's experiences also offer useful cautions to today's compassionate conservatives regarding what can be accomplished and how. First, although Brace did save and change lives, it's worth considering whose lives he chose to affect.

Brace sought to shape the character of poor children and adolescents because he despaired of success in affecting adults in need of character

Joel Schwartz is the author of Fighting Poverty with Virtue: Moral Reform and America's Urban Poor, 1825-2000, *forthcoming in October from Indiana University Press.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reformation. His early experiences working with adults led him to conclude that "no permanent result . . . can be hoped for [from] works of reform . . . which do not bear upon the young." Attempts to cure the dependency of "the old poor," or to reform the character of misbehaving adults, were "almost hopeless," because it was hard to alter habits and passions once people were set in their ways. In contrast, children and adolescents could be formed and set on the proper path with comparative ease.

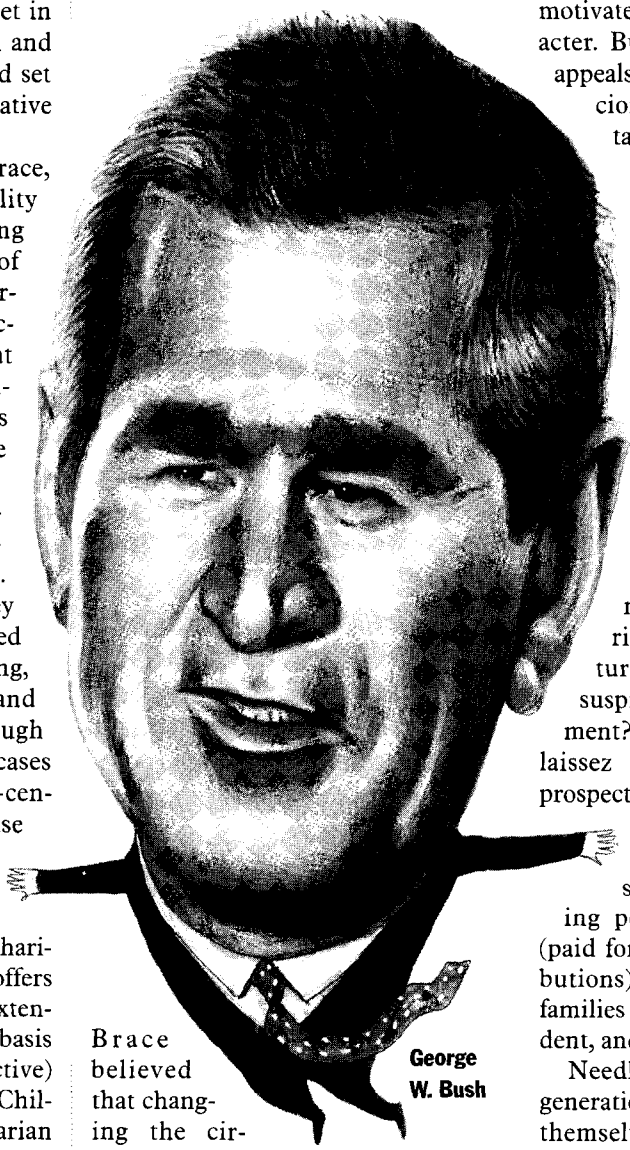
Far from being unique to Brace, pessimism about the reformability of adults was standard among practitioners and observers of nineteenth-century charity. A survey of American charitable practice in 1894 concluded that "except among dependent children, the cure of dependency is the exception rather than the rule."

This nineteenth-century pessimism should give today's compassionate conservatives pause. In the absence of hard data, they sometimes declare that faith-based charities work wonders in curing, for example, drug addictions and assorted other social ills. Although successes in individual cases undoubtedly occur, nineteenth-century assessments give little cause for confidence that the success is particularly widespread.

A second caution concerns the role of faith in faith-based charities. Here too, Brace's example offers a surprising twist. Despite his extensive discussion of the Christian basis of his (and in his view of all effective) charitable work, in practice the Children's Aid Society was nonsectarian and offered little religious instruction. Brace even welcomed atheists ("those of no defined religious belief") as workers for the society.

Religion posed a thorny issue for Brace, because it is impossible to be religious in the abstract. Instead, worshipers have to adhere to one or another concrete, particular religion. Brace himself was Protestant, but many of the New York youths whom he served were Catholic. Brace accordingly deemphasized religious (as opposed to moral) instruction, in a not altogether successful effort to ward off charges of proselytism.

He also deemphasized religious instruction because of its sometimes limited appeal to his youthful charges.



George W. Bush

Illustration by Earl Keleny

Brace believed that changing the circumstances in which youths lived (by transporting them from the city to the country) was often "of far more importance . . . than any possible influence of Sunday-schools or Chapels." And he sympathized with street urchins who were unreceptive to the long-winded orations of preachers intent on their reformation. Similarly, one of Brace's counterparts today—the Reverend Eugene Rivers—is said to keep preaching to a minimum in his work with Massachusetts youths. When he pushed religion harder on kids in the past, Rivers reportedly discovered that many of them were intimidated and turned off.

To judge from Brace's testimony, appeals to religion seem often to have motivated desirable changes in character. But at other times, religious appeals seem to have aroused suspicion and to have evoked resistance. Compassionate conservatives should consider whether religion today is likely to produce only the desired result, but never the undesired consequence.

Brace's career also offers a third lesson to today's compassionate conservatives, concerning the role of government. In Governor Bush's formulation, "Government cannot be replaced by charities—but it can welcome them as partners, not resent them as rivals." Were nineteenth-century charitable leaders more suspicious of the role of government? Not Brace. In the heyday of laissez faire he welcomed the prospect of partnership with government. Brace was among the earliest advocates of social insurance for the working poor: government programs (paid for in part by workers' contributions) to assist workers and their families in coping with old age, accident, and illness.

Needless to say, in the last two generations government programs by themselves have not managed to eradicate poverty. The recognition of this failure explains the interest in supplementing—or replacing—compassionate liberalism with compassionate conservatism. More than a century ago, Brace seems to have understood the insufficiency of government without religion, as well as the insufficiency of religion without government. Was he wrong? ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Not So Great Debate Debate

The Bush and Gore campaigns engage in a ritual squabble. BY TUCKER CARLSON

As of last week, Al Gore had been invited to participate in 45 presidential debates. Gore has "accepted all of them," boasts aide Mark Fabiani, "legitimate and half-way legitimate," including an offer from would-be moderator David Letterman. Gore says he wants to debate as often as possible, and he has challenged George W. Bush to join him in all 45 forums. If Bush were to agree, television viewers could watch a new presidential debate every weeknight from Labor Day to the election.

This is not likely to happen. Bush has said he will appear in three debates with Al Gore. Dick Cheney will meet Joe Lieberman twice. To reporters who ask, the Bush campaign describes the five debates as "historic." (No other modern presidential ticket has appeared in more than four.) "We think participating in a record-breaking number is a fitting way to bring the issues before the American people," says campaign spokesman Ari Fleischer. Fleischer goes on to point out that in 1964, 1968, and 1972 there were no presidential debates at all.

For what it's worth, all of this is true. But unlike every other major presidential candidate since 1988, Bush has not agreed to participate in the debates arranged by the nonprofit Commission on Presidential Debates. This year, the commission has proposed debates that would be 90 minutes long, broadcast during prime time. It is likely they would be aired simultaneously by all six television networks. This arrangement is called "roadblock" coverage (viewers can't get around it), and it guarantees enormous ratings. By one estimate, the final presidential debate in 1992 drew 97 million viewers.

Bush doesn't want to participate in a debate like this, the Gore campaign charges, because he is fearful of looking foolish. "They want practice runs," scoffs a senior Gore adviser. "They don't want the first debate he participates in to be watched by 97 million people." Gore himself has pressed the point relentlessly. Late last week Gore announced that, before he will debate Bush in any other forum, Bush must first agree to appear at a commission-sponsored debate.

Bush officials say they feel no pressure to rise to the bait. "Roadblocking doesn't carry the same weight it did 15 years ago," says Bush campaign manager Joe Allbaugh, who spent last week meeting with network executives in Washington. "Because of cable and satellite there are 250 channels people can watch." Bush, his advisers say, might prefer to stage a debate on a single broadcast network (during a Sunday morning news show, for instance) or on a cable program like *Larry King Live*. The point is, the presidential debate commission debates aren't the only possible debates. "They're not sanctioned by any state or federal law that I'm aware of," Allbaugh says. "They kind of created themselves out of thin air." Other Bush strategists are more direct: "Nobody elected the commission," says one. "Who put them in charge?"

These are valid questions, but they may cease to matter. Gore will probably win the rhetorical battle because, fundamentally, his argument makes more sense: The commission debates reach the most people. Why not agree to them?

The Bush campaign has a couple of answers. Neither is very convincing. The first is, Bush is resisting the debate commission because the debate commission is an instrument of the Washington status quo, and Bush is a maverick. "We're thinking outside the box," explains an aide. The second is, "No one cares" about boring logistical details like these: "This is a debate about a debate." It's too inside to matter. And anyway, in the end, Bush will debate Gore.

Perhaps these arguments will work. More likely, many voters will conclude that Bush is afraid to debate Gore.

The irony is that Bush aides are fairly confident about their candidate's debating skills. We know this because they pretend not to be. "Al Gore is a formidable debater," says Ari Fleischer. "He's very, very good." No doubt, agrees Bush media consultant Mark McKinnon. "If this were a race for debater-in-chief, it would be a runaway."

There is a don't-throw-me-into-the-briar-patch quality to statements like these. If members of Bush's staff really thought their boss was going to get clobbered in the debates, it is unlikely they'd say so. (Bush staffers almost never make unauthorized statements.) The Bush campaign is taking the debates seriously, but no one seems panicked. Bush will spar extensively with Sen. Judd Gregg, who will play the part of Gore in mock debates. Campaign advisers have read and reread a recent article in the *Atlantic Monthly* by James Fallows that offers insight into Gore's fundamental debating strategy (needle opponents until they lose control of themselves). They feel prepared. The belief in Austin is, Bush will turn out to be more skillful on stage than expected.

But even if he doesn't, there is an argument that Bush should debate early and often anyway. This was John McCain's advice to Bush dur-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ADVERTISEMENT

What We Know About Ecstasy

What is Ecstasy?

Ecstasy, MDMA,[1] is a semi-synthetic drug patented by Merck Pharmaceutical Company in 1914 and abandoned for 60 years. In the late 1970s and early 1980s psychiatrists and psychotherapists in the US used it to facilitate psychotherapy.[2] In 1985 its growing recreational use caused the DEA to criminalize it.

Ecstasy's effects last 3 to 6 hours. It is a mood elevator that produces feelings of empathy, openness and well-being. People who take it at all night "rave" dances say they enjoy dancing and feeling close to others. It does not produce violence or physical addiction.[3]

What are the greatest risks from Ecstasy?

Death is a possibility when using MDMA. According to coroner reports, there were nine Ecstasy-related deaths (three of these involved Ecstasy alone) in 1998.[4] Some of these deaths are related to overheating. MDMA slightly raises body temperature. This is potentially lethal in hot environments where there is vigorous dancing and the lack of adequate fluid replacement.[5] Many of these tragic deaths were preventable with simple harm reduction techniques such as having free water available and rooms where people can rest and relax.

One of the recent risks associated with Ecstasy is the possibility of obtaining adulterated drugs that may be more toxic than MDMA. Some of the reported deaths attributed to Ecstasy are likely caused by other, more dangerous drugs.[6] Deaths from adulterated drugs are another consequence of a zero tolerance approach. While we do not encourage Ecstasy use, we recommend that the drug be tested for purity to minimize the risk from adulterated drugs by those who consume it.[7] However, MDMA itself has risks. For example, it raises blood pressure and heart rate. Persons with known cardiovascular or heart disease should not take MDMA.

Recent studies have indicated that individuals who have used MDMA may have decreased performance in memory tests compared to nonusers. These studies are presently controversial because they involved people who used a variety of other drugs. Furthermore, it is difficult to rule out possible pre-existing differences between research subjects and controls.[8]

What is a rave?

Raves are all-night dance parties popular with young people that feature electronic music. A variety of drug use, from alcohol to nicotine, and including ecstasy, occurs at raves. Hysteria is leading to criminalization of raves, thus pushing them underground and into less safe and responsible settings.

Let's deal with legal and illegal drugs knowledgeably, understand their relative dangers, act prudently and avoid hysteria.

For more information, visit: www.csdp.org, Common Sense for Drug Policy, Kevin B. Zeese, President
703-354-9050, 703-354-5695 (Fax), info @ csdp.org

1, 3 & 4 - methylenedioxymethamphetamine. **2** - Greer G. and Tolbert R., A Method of Conducting Therapeutic Sessions with MDMA. In Journal of Psychoactive Drugs 30 (1998) 4:371.379. For research on the therapeutic use of MDMA see: www.maps.org. **3** - Beck J. and Rosenbaum M., Pursuit of Ecstasy: The MDMA Experience. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994. **4** - Drug Abuse Warning Network, Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Report of March 21, 2000. (This was a special report because the published report only includes drugs where there were over 10 deaths.) **5** - C.M. Milroy; J.C. Clark; A.R.W. Forrest, Pathology of deaths associated with "ecstasy" and "eve" misuse, Journal of Clinical Pathology Vol 49 (1996) 149-153. **6** - Laboratory Pill Analysis Program, DanceSafe. For results visit www.DanceSafe.org. See also, Byard RW et al., Amphetamine derivative fatalities in South Australia—is "Ecstasy" the culprit?. American Journal of Forensic Medical Pathology, 998 (Sep) 19(3): 261-5. **7** - DanceSafe provides testing equipment and a testing service which can be used to determine what a substance is. See www.DanceSafe.org. **8** - E. Gouzoulis-Mayfrank; J. Daumann; F. Tuchtenhagen; S. Pelz; S. Becker; H.J. Kunert; B. Fimm; H. Sass; Impaired cognitive performance in drug-free users of recreational ecstasy (MDMA), by Journal Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry Vol 68, June 2000, 719-725; K.I.Bolla; U.D.; McCann; G.A. Ricaurte; Memory impairment in abstinent MDMA ('Ecstasy') users, by Neurology Vol 51, Dec 1998, 1532-1537.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing their first kiss-and-make-up meeting this spring in Pittsburgh. With each debate, McCain reasoned, Bush would grow more comfortable and fluid. And with so many debates to watch, public interest would rapidly diminish. Each debate would become less significant. Bush could bomb in one and make it up at the next.

This is roughly what happened during the primaries. During one of his first appearances with the other candidates, in Arizona, Bush came close to embarrassing himself. Steve Forbes, hardly a master of the extemporaneous jab, seemed to stump him with a simple question about oil exploration, a business Bush knows intimately. By the last debate, in California in March, Bush had improved. Some on Bush's staff believe it was his best performance. (It may have helped that John McCain appeared that night by remote from a St. Louis television studio.)

It was certainly more impressive than the performance Bush gave last December, when he decided to skip the early primary debates. One of those debates was sponsored in part by New Hampshire's largest newspaper, the Manchester *Union Leader*. "Bush claimed he couldn't attend because Laura was receiving an alumni award at Southern Methodist University," remembers Bernadette Malone Connolly, the paper's editorial page editor. "We wrote an editorial saying that real men can make schedule changes to accommodate presidential debates." The Bush campaign responded immediately. "They called us and said, 'How dare you? Mrs. Bush is very upset.' They feigned outrage."

In the end, it didn't matter. Relatively few people outside of New Hampshire even noticed. The other candidates were unable to turn Bush's no-show into a significant news story. This time, people in the rest of the country are paying attention. And Al Gore is a far better publicist than the rest of the GOP primary candidates combined. ♦

The Beginning of the Endgame

Get ready for one last showdown between Congress and Clinton. BY MATTHEW REES

As congressional Republicans return to Washington this week, preparing for their final budget scrum with Bill Clinton, they're gripped by a familiar emotion: fear. Fear that they will end up capitulating to costly Democratic health care proposals covering HMOs and prescription drugs. Fear that they can't count on George W. Bush, who has studiously distanced himself from Capitol Hill. And fear that no matter how much they compromise their principles in order to adjourn by the end of the fiscal year, October 1, Bill Clinton will force a government shutdown, whereupon public opinion will turn against them, and they'll lose their majorities in Congress.

Based on recent history, Republican fears are entirely justified. In the titanic budget showdown from November 1995 to January 1996, the GOP got slaughtered in the public relations war. As a result, in 1996 and 1998, during the year-end budget wrangling, Republicans were so eager to prevent another government shutdown they agreed to Democrats' demands for billions in new spending.

Amazingly, for all the GOP grousing in years past about paying such exorbitant exit fees, the party looks doomed to repeat the pattern. As even John Kasich, chairman of the House Budget Committee, conceded recently on *Meet the Press*, "Bill Clinton, along with Al Gore, is going to demand more spending. . . . And you know what? They will get more spending."

Matthew Rees is a staff writer at The Weekly Standard.

The best illustration of the GOP's defensive crouch is a letter Hastert sent Clinton on August 27. In it, the House speaker agreed to a Democratic proposal to raise the hourly minimum wage to $6.15 over the next two years, and withdrew his request that the wage increase be linked to expanded pension coverage and a repeal of the estate tax. The timing of the letter—sent more than a week before Congress even reconvened, and just a few days after John Podesta, the White House chief of staff, had sent Hastert a tartly worded letter about Clinton administration priorities—suggested preemptive surrender. Making matters worse, Hastert's letter angered Senate Republican leaders, who were given no advance notice of it. "Counterproductive," was the diplomatic assessment of one GOP leadership aide.

Yet even if Hastert and Lott reach agreements with the White House—a big if—they'll still have to contend with congressional Democrats. Tom Daschle, the Senate Democratic leader, has previewed his party's combative posture, saying, "It's either going to take a lot of cooperation, or you're going to see a train wreck." The Democratic mindset is that it's better to hold out at this late stage in order to prevent Republicans from taking credit for anything. "This is no time to take half a loaf," says a Democratic leadership aide, pointing to the Kennedy-Kassebaum health care bill of 1996 as the kind of measure to be avoided because it "allowed Republicans to get off cheap." And while House Democrats might feel more pressure

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to adjourn, in the interest of getting home to campaign, the only Senate Democratic incumbent who's in a truly tight race is Chuck Robb, and he represents neighboring Virginia.

Given all this, Republicans have been devising a variety of damage-control strategies. Votes to override Clinton's veto of bills ending the marriage penalty and the estate tax will be held soon. And to counter Clinton's call for mandating a new prescription drug benefit, GOP senators Wayne Allard and Bob Smith have put forward a market-oriented plan that would not result in premium hikes.

Most Republicans are spooked by the prescription-drug issue, believing it's the one legislative issue that could cause them to lose their congressional majorities. But Senator Spencer Abraham, a Michigan Republican in a tight reelection race, has turned it to his advantage. He's charging that the Democratic proposal embraced by his opponent, Debbie Stabenow, would lead to annual premiums of $600—"a prescription for disaster," according to his television ads. Abraham has so neutralized the issue, says his campaign manager, Joe McMonigle, that "we're happy to have one vote after another" on it. Indeed, since launching these ads against Stabenow, Abraham has surged to a nine-point lead.

Another defensive strategy: Trent Lott has brought John McCain into his inner circle of advisers. While the two have traditionally had frosty relations, Lott nonetheless plans to make the former presidential candidate the GOP's public face during the budget negotiations. McCain's reputation for candor has some Republicans questioning the wisdom of this. But others recognize that with his personal popularity, and coziness with the media, he's the only one in the GOP who's a match for Clinton in a budget debate.

Assuming Congress can't reach a budget agreement with the White House by the October 1 deadline, Kentucky senator Mitch McConnell has been floating an idea that is being well received among Republicans. Come October, says McConnell, Congress should pass one temporary measure after another keeping the government open, with spending set at current levels or a little bit higher. The idea is that if Clinton vetoed one of these resolutions, which would result in a government shutdown, he would be the clear villain, and all Democrats would suffer.

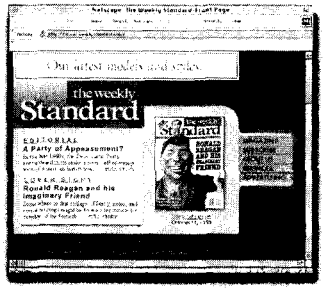
This might work, though given the way in which congressional Republicans have been snookered by Clinton in past budget battles, it's natural to wonder whether any strategy to stare him down can succeed. Indeed, that's one reason Republicans are quaking in their boots. In a letter to his Republican colleagues last week, Lott wrote, "Let me make this clear. Congress will not bring about a government shutdown, and there is no reason for there to be a government shutdown."

A messy budget showdown might hurt congressional Republicans—but it could also benefit Bush. It would entail the reemergence of Clinton—hardly a good thing for Gore. Indeed, says Scott Reed, Bob Dole's campaign manager in 1996, "if Clinton tries to manufacture a budget fight, it will gut Gore." Reed is not alone in thinking this way. Many Republicans believe Bush could use a budget battle as a potent symbol of what's wrong with Washington, underscoring the need for his bipartisan brand of governing. Of course, while that would sully Gore and congressional Democrats, it would also, by extension, sully congressional Republicans.

Would Bush dare adopt such a pose so close to the election? You bet. He never mentioned the Republicans on Capitol Hill in his speech at the GOP convention, and he even remarked, "I have no stake in the bitter arguments of the last few years."

Bush's objective between now and Election Day is simple: to remain as detached from the shenanigans in Congress as possible. Given the Republican record of recent years, and the likely outcome this year, it's hard to blame him. ♦

Visit weeklystandard.com



Website for the nation's foremost political weekly.

the weekly Standard

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Rise of "Bastard Nation"

And the threat to adoption

By Ira Carnahan

When Jane Doe No. 1 decided to place her baby for adoption in 1961, she was promised her decision would be kept confidential. That's what the law said in Oregon, where her baby was born, and that's what her doctor, a nun, and the attorney handling the adoption assured her, too. Jane, 21 and unmarried, gave up her baby and went on with her life. By 1998 she had a husband and four kids, none of whom knew about her other child.

That soon threatened to change. An Oregon adoptee named Helen Hill, working with an activist group called Bastard Nation, launched a campaign to throw out the state's laws shielding the names of mothers who place children for adoption. Such laws aren't fair to adoptees, they argued. "You can't cut a human being off from knowledge of their roots," Hill said. "It's a really inhumane thing to do."

Hill and Bastard Nation campaigned hard for the "open records" initiative. Oregon voters responded, approving it in November 1998 with 57 percent of the vote. Shortly after, Jane and several other anonymous birth mothers filed suit. "Having kept this secret from my family and community these many years, disclosure of confidential information would be worse for me now than it would have been at the time that the events occurred," Jane wrote in an affidavit.

"The events surrounding the child's birth and my decision to place her for adoption in 1961 were among the most difficult and emotionally painful I have ever experienced," she explained. "If that confidential information is released, I will have absolutely no control over its use and publication to other persons, including my husband and children."

Too bad, the courts declared. In a string of rulings, which the U.S. Supreme Court recently let stand, judges held that the promises made to mothers giving up babies weren't legally binding and that the mothers have no right to privacy. And so the Oregon Health Division is now mailing out thousands of formerly sealed birth certificates.

Encouraged by its success in Oregon, Bastard Nation is looking to change the law in other states. In Alabama, the governor recently signed an open-records bill modeled on Oregon's, and in Tennessee, an open-records law recently went into effect. In Delaware, a law opening birth certificates with some limits took effect last year. And in Washington state, Bastard Nation and other activists are gearing up for an open-records initiative in 2001 like the one in Oregon.

Founded in 1996, Bastard Nation doesn't believe in compromise. It opposes laws already on the books in most states that promote contact between birth mother and child when both want it, but that give birth mothers the option to withhold release of their names and other identifying information. Such laws are unacceptable, declares a group publication called the *Basic Bastard*: "Any legislation that provides for less than access on demand, without compromise, is a violation of the basic right to equal protection under the law as guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution."

To advance its agenda, the group publishes the *Bastard Quarterly*, which provides "a forum for Bastard Nationals to express themselves." An essay by one of the group's founders proclaims: "In Bastard Nation, adoptees have found a voice. We are loud, powerful and ready to demand justice in the form of open records. The Era of the Bastard has arrived."

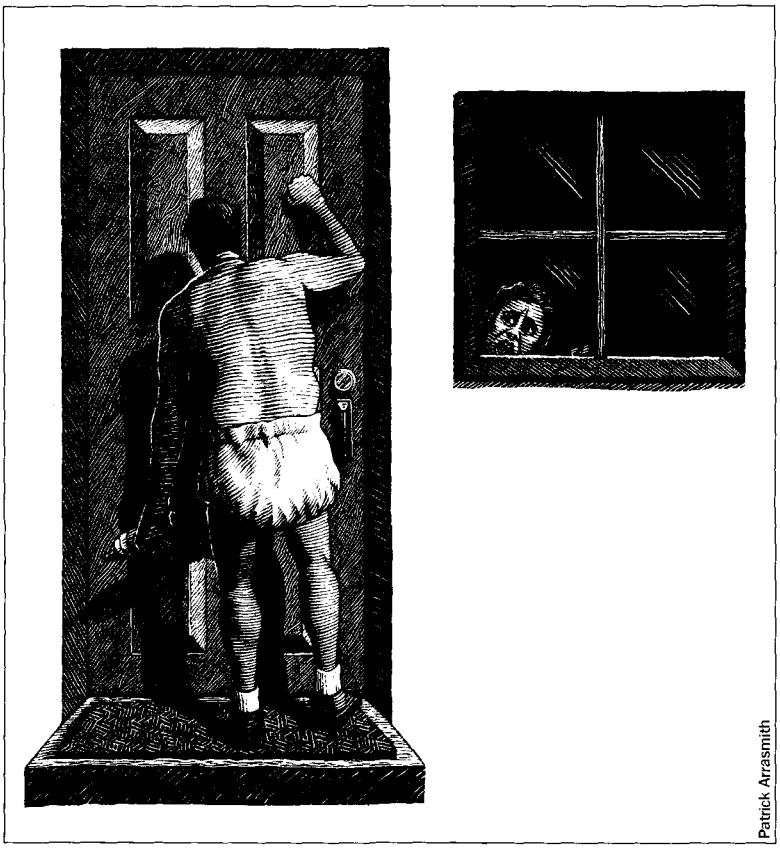
Bastard Nation's rhetoric and tactics resemble those of gay activist groups such as Queer Nation and ACT UP. Take the protest the group held last year in front of the D.C. headquarters of the National Council for Adoption, whose founding president, William Pierce, is the leading defender of the confidentiality of records: "Clad in black T-shirts emblazoned with a bright gold logo called a 'spermburst,' the Bastard Nation protesters chant, 'Willie P, Willie P, why are you afraid of me?'" the *Wash-*

Ira Carnahan is a freelance writer in Washington, D.C.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ington City Paper reported. "On Bastard Nation political buttons, his exaggeratedly scraggly face is depicted with a diagonal rubout line across it. He was hung in effigy at a previous rally. . . . 'We shall put this beast in chains and shall vanquish him utterly,' roars Marley Greiner, the self-described 'founding foundling' of Bastard Nation."

Greiner, the executive chair of Bastard Nation, refers to mothers as "breeders," spells America with a "k," and signs her postings to Internet chat rooms "by all means necessary." Yet she blames the ugliness of the adoption records debate squarely on the other side. "I personally think that Bill Pierce has made civil discourse on adoption almost impossible in this country today," she says.


Patrick Arrasmith

Pierce, an avuncular 64-year-old former executive at the Child Welfare League of America, begs to differ. "What you're dealing with are very, very clever propagandists," he says. "They are quite skillful." That skill comes through on Bastard Nation's website (*www.bastards.org*) and in the way the group seeks to frame the adoption records debate. It's not about balancing birth mothers' and adoptees' interests, or assessing the effect of opening records on the number of adoptions. No, it's a simple matter of civil rights.

"We feel that humans have a fundamental right to their identity, and that the government should not be putting up impediments to keep people from accessing their own vital records," says Ron Morgan, who lives in San Francisco and is one of three members of Bastard Nation's executive committee. "We feel that it's a civil right for us to access them."

Bastard Nation members also talk a lot about their pride and dignity. The group's mission statement declares, "We have reclaimed the badge of bastardy placed on us by those who would attempt to shame us; we see nothing shameful in having been born out of wedlock or in being adopted." But this defiant stance seems a bit odd. No one today, after all, suggests that adoptees should feel any shame. The question is whether adoptees' birth mothers ought to be stripped of their confidentiality even though they were promised they wouldn't be.

In arguing they should be, adoptee-rights activists make a number of dubious claims. One is that adoptees need the names of their birth parents so that they can obtain vital medical background information. This claim appeals to the public. The truth, though, is that Oregon and other states already provide for the release of medical information when needed, without disclosing the mother's identity if she wishes to remain anonymous. To be sure, the release of information often isn't as easy or complete as it could be. But the obvious solution is to improve the system of release; there's no need to compromise birth mothers' confidentiality.

Another claim, often repeated by journalists, is that nearly all birth mothers want to be contacted, so not opening birth records is denying the wishes of the many to satisfy the desires of a reclusive few. But that appears untrue. While the precise percentage isn't clear, Pierce suggests at least one-third of birth mothers don't want personal contact, as revealed by their responses when contacted by state-authorized intermediaries in Oregon, prior to the new law, and in Florida.

The most controversial claim of adoptee-rights activists is that abolishing confidentiality won't lead more women to seek abortions. Pierce says that's absurd. "It's a no-brainer," he says. "Put yourself in the position of a young woman. All you have to do is look at countries where they do not allow, in essence, any privacy for adoption and they allow privacy for abortion, like Japan, and you find almost no adoptions and you find abortions are almost universally the option of choice.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Because a choice which is not private is no choice at all."

That's not just Pierce's view. Jeremiah Gutman, former chairman of the American Civil Liberties Union's privacy committee, has written that a pregnant woman "may be inclined to bring the pregnancy to term rather than secure an abortion, but, if she cannot rely upon the adoption agency or attorney and the law to protect her privacy, and to conceal her identity for all time, her choice to go the abortion route may be compelled by that lack of confidence in confidentiality."

Nonsense, replies Bastard Nation. As evidence that ending confidentiality won't lead to more abortions, the group cites below-average rates of abortion in Kansas and Alaska, which have long had open birth records. But the fact that abortion rates are below the national average in these two states is not a surprise, given their demographics. If, instead, we compare the abortion rate in Kansas with the rates in nearby states where the demographics are similar, we find that Kansas's rate is well above average. Such statistical points aside, it is striking that Bastard Nation and other adoptee-rights groups, whose ranks are filled with ardent defenders of abortion, have no patience with a privacy argument on behalf of women who place babies for adoption.

Why? Because it would limit adoptees' rights. And that won't do. "The underlying principle of the adoption movement is the determination to be free of those limitations that have not been imposed on non-adopted citizens," declares an article on Bastard Nation's website. "The issue is whether adoptees are to be allowed to emancipate from chattel-child status into autonomous adults, or are they to continue to be infantilized by the ongoing control of the State and agency, birth parents and adoptive parents?"

Not all adoptees who seek open records are so militant. While those who are politicized talk about their rights, the unpoliticized talk about their wounds. One man wrote recently in the *Oregonian*, the state's largest newspaper, "As an adoptee, I have been drifting, lost, most of my life." He was, he said, "driven unconsciously to solve the riddle of my blood."

This notion of blood and biology as central to identity runs deep in adoptee-rights rhetoric. "One's biological history is as much a part of the essential self as limbs or senses," argues an article on the Bastard Nation site. "To be deprived of knowledge of one's origins and ancestry is to be maimed as surely as to be deprived of limbs or sight." It is one of the oddities of the adoption records debate that the typically left-leaning advocates of open records stress the importance of genes and blood, while advocates of sealed records, who are often on the right, have little use for such talk.

While Bastard Nation's main interest lies in opening adoption records, the group is also moving into other areas. The most prominent is opposition to so-called safe haven laws, which allow mothers who would otherwise abandon newborns in dumpsters or alleys instead to drop them off, no questions asked, at designated centers, where the children can then be placed for adoption. Such laws are sweeping through state legislatures, and Bastard Nation is appalled. While the group raises several objections, the one that most obviously explains its interest in the issue is its claim that safe haven laws "obliterate the identity rights of the abandoned child." The group condemns the laws—intended to prevent infant deaths—for "lifting entirely the obligation to collect and record any identity information, in contravention of the widely recognized human right to an identity."

While Bastard Nation likely won't have much success with this argument, the prospects for open adoption records look brighter. In fact, with the rise of "open adoption," in which birth parents, adoptive parents, and adoptees keep in contact, the number of birth parents requiring confidentiality is falling. E. Wayne Carp, a historian of adoption at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington, suggests too that opening records probably won't sharply reduce the number of children placed for adoption since the number of children put up for adoption in the United States is already low. "I would say if we look out at the adoption picture now it could hardly get fewer," he says. "The numbers have been shrinking without open records as it is. It's a remarkable figure that almost 98 percent of women who give birth to children out of wedlock keep them now," he says. "It's unbelievable, but they do."

Even if the further weakening of adoption isn't Bastard Nation's goal—and they say it isn't—this might be an unintended effect. Pierce, of the National Council for Adoption, points abroad as a warning of what could happen here. In 1975, England and Wales moved from confidential records to open records. Since then the annual number of adoptions of children under age one has plummeted from 4,548 to just 322 in 1995, a 93 percent decline. "The data are clear and unequivocal," Pierce says. "Infant adoption is a relic in England and Wales."

Could the same thing happen here? It's hard to say. In England and Wales, the number of adoptions was already falling when records were unsealed. It's clear too that the number of adoptions is shaped by many factors, of which the law is just one. Yet it's hardly farfetched that ending confidentiality could lead fewer women to place babies for adoption. Within the next few years, we are likely to find out. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Quota King

Bill Clinton defies the Senate by appointing Bill Lann Lee. Will the Democrats pay a price?

By Roger Clegg

On August 3, President Clinton used—in fact, abused—his recess-appointment authority to make Bill Lann Lee the head of the Justice Department's civil rights division. The action was a slap in the face to the Republican-controlled Senate. It will be interesting to see if it is ignored.

The appointment was a constitutional affront to the Senate. Article II of the Constitution provides that "Officers of the United States"—which everyone agrees includes the head of the civil rights division—are subject to the Senate's "advice and consent." Lee was nominated in the summer of 1997, but the Senate never confirmed him. To the contrary: His nomination died in the Senate Judiciary Committee when *Democrats* filibustered after it had become apparent that there were not enough votes to confirm him. There were too many senators on the committee who could not stomach Lee's record at the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund of supporting racial and ethnic preferences, and his failure to reassure the committee that he would break with this record as head of the civil rights division.

President Clinton, however, installed Lee as the "acting" head of the division anyway, on December 15, 1997. Clinton even acknowledged that it was an extraconstitutional appointment: "I have done my best to work with the United States Senate in an entirely constitutional way," the president said then. "But we had to get somebody into the civil rights division." There Lee has served for the past two and a half years, until last month's recess appointment.

The Clinton administration will argue that the initial "acting" appointment and this summer's "recess" appointment were technically within the president's authority. It will also dispute the contention of senator Orrin Hatch and, across the aisle, senator Robert Byrd that the Lee appointment violated the federal Vacancies Act. But the administration cannot evade this fundamental point: The person who heads the civil rights division requires Senate confirmation, and the Senate not only didn't confirm Lee, it *rejected* him according to its rules. There may be no legal recourse, but the Senate should nonetheless exact a political price for the president's highhandedness.

The fitting punishment is obvious. Since the president has abused his appointment power, the Senate should shut down its confirmation process. No more judicial or nonmilitary executive-branch nominations should be confirmed until a new administration is sworn in. This is an especially appropriate course of action in this case, because Lee's continued service threatens the "equal protection of the laws" guaranteed by the Constitution—which senators swear to uphold. The Senate needs to act not only to defend its own prerogatives established by the Constitution, but to defend the rights of individual citizens.

The Lee appointment was not just a constitutional abuse by Clinton, but one that made blatantly partisan use of the Justice Department. The appointment came during the Republican convention, on the day of George W. Bush's speech. And lest there be any confusion about the president's intent, White House spokesman Joe Lockhart said the GOP's refusal to confirm Lee stood "in sharp contrast to the theatrical performance in Philadelphia, designed to obscure" a lack of "commitment to civil rights enforcement." Elliot Diringer, another White House spokesman, chimed in on the same theme: "It's one thing to put on a show of diversity," he said, but something else to "support vigorous civil rights enforcement." In other words, since Republicans are anti-Lee, they must be anti-civil rights.

This is an opening Republicans should seize, because Lee's record as head of the division puts a spotlight on the difference in the two major parties' visions of civil

Roger Clegg is general counsel of the Center for Equal Opportunity in Washington, D.C. From 1987 to 1991, he served as a deputy in the Justice Department's civil rights division.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

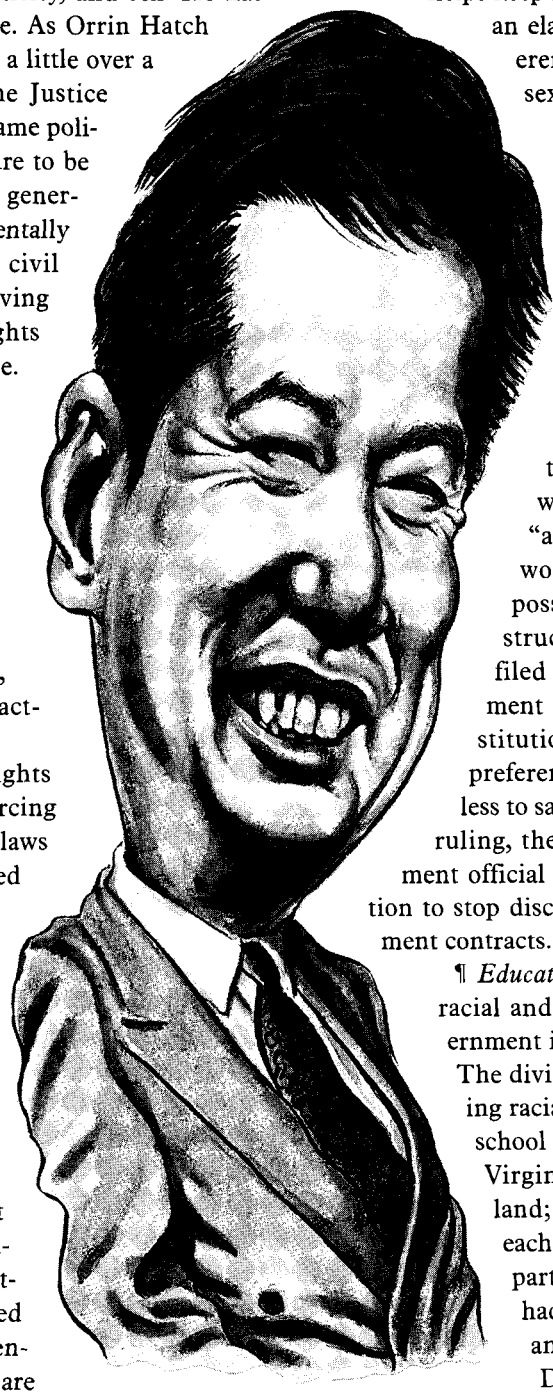
rights. And the Republican vision is shared by most Americans—including, at least until his vice presidential nomination, Joseph Lieberman.

Republican hostility to Lee has focused on one issue: Lee's consistent, adamant support for classifications and preferences based on race, ethnicity, and sex. He has never met a quota he didn't like. As Orrin Hatch said after Lee had been in office a little over a year: "During Lee's tenure, the Justice Department has advocated the same policies that initially led to his failure to be confirmed as assistant attorney general." There is something fundamentally wrong with the nation's top civil rights enforcement officer believing that each citizen's civil rights depend on that citizen's bloodline.

Consider Lee's record at the Justice Department so far. Under his leadership, the civil rights division has consistently used or defended others' use of racial, ethnic, and gender classifications and preferences, whether in employment, contracting, education, or voting.

¶ *Employment*. The civil rights division is responsible for enforcing employment antidiscrimination laws in the public sector. Lee has used this authority perversely. In cases involving police, firefighters, teachers, and others, the division presses public employers to apply double standards, or to lower standards, if that's what it takes to get the "right" numbers of favored groups on the payroll.

Thus, in litigation against the New York City Board of Education, the division imposed a settlement agreement that included this provision: "If the aforementioned test preparation sessions are oversubscribed, preferences will be given to black, Hispanic, Asian and women applicants." It likewise filed a brief in another New York case arguing that it is perfectly legal to redesign a police application test deliberately so that fewer whites and more blacks will pass it. Imagine the justified outrage had the shoe been on the other foot.



Bill Lann Lee

Illustration by Drew Friedman

¶ *Contracting*. Another division responsibility is defending the federal government when it is sued for discrimination in its contracting programs. This helps keep Lee busy, since the government has an elaborate system of contracting preferences based on race, ethnicity, and sex—in the face of a 1995 Supreme Court decision making clear such discrimination is presumptively illegal. Despite President Clinton's promise to "mend, not end" these preferences, the administration has done neither.

Lee, for instance, has filed a brief defending an Environmental Protection Agency regulation that requires its prime contractors, when awarding subcontracts, to "assure that small, minority, and women's businesses are used when possible as sources of supplies, construction and services." And he has filed briefs defending Defense Department discrimination, as well as the constitutionality of Houston's contracting preferences based on race and sex. Needless to say, and despite the high court's 1995 ruling, the nation's top civil rights enforcement official has not persuaded his administration to stop discriminating in its award of government contracts.

¶ *Education*. Lee has defended the use of racial and ethnic classifications by the government in a variety of educational contexts. The division has filed amicus briefs defending racial and ethnic quotas used by public school districts. When Arlington County, Virginia; Montgomery County, Maryland; and West Irondequoit, New York, each refused to allow students to attend particular public schools because they had the "wrong" skin color and ethnic ancestry, Lee made sure the Justice Department weighed in on the side of the schools. The division has, likewise, defended the University of Washington School of Law's authority to employ racial double standards in its admissions, the better to ensure a politically correct mix of students.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Indeed, the civil rights division has defended such discrimination even by states with a history of discriminating against minorities. The division is defending Alabama's prerogative to discriminate against a black student who was denied a scholarship because of his race. The rationale was that the scholarship had been set up by a historically black school to encourage more white students to attend the school.

¶ *Voting*. Lee has continued the division's practice—which has a sad history of bipartisan support—of pressing state and local jurisdictions to engage in racial gerrymandering, to make sure that as many "majority-minority" voting districts as possible are carved out. Of course, cramming all minorities into a few districts means their political influence is marginalized and their leadership radicalized. To be fair, it would take some gumption to oppose the combined interests of many congressional Republicans and the Congressional Black Caucus. But Lee has not only not shown such courage, he has made his own contribution to modern racial gerrymandering: an aggressive initiative to add American Indians to this cynical balkanization game.

All this quota-mongering contrasts sharply with the original vision of the civil rights laws, a vision still shared by most Americans. As Senator Lieberman put it in 1995: "You can't defend policies that are based on group preferences as opposed to individual opportunities, which is what America has always been about." The use of such preferences, Lieberman added, is "un-American" and "has to end" because it is "fueling division between the races."

Lieberman was right; Bill Lann Lee is wrong. Bush and Cheney and other Republicans should not hesitate to say so. The Senate should not shrink from a confrontation with the Clinton administration over its abuse of the appointment process. And as for Al Gore, he should be asked whether, if elected, he intends to keep Lee in place. ♦

STRANDED ON A DESERT WASTELAND...

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ADVERTISEMENT

"Valhalla, USA"

Would that it was not a dream.

Bobby Jones, Ben Hogan, Bob May, and Tiger Woods teed off on the Valhalla Country Club's first hole, a demanding golf course in Lexington, Kentucky designed by the great Jack Nicklaus.

Team Woods and May went off first. Tiger hit a monster drive. Bobby Jones said, "You need a telescope to see how far Tiger's ball went."

Bob May followed. Ben Hogan asked him, "Bob, how does it feel to almost beat Tiger, the greatest golfer on earth?"

"I said to myself," Bob May replied, "walking off the final green defeated and dejected, in late August, it was nearly early May." They all laughed.

After nine holes, they were even. Walking along, Bobby Jones said to Tiger Woods, "The other day playing with Jack Nicklaus, on the last hole you purposely fell several paces back of Jack so that he alone would get the crowd's applause and cheers."

"It was nothing," Tiger answered. "Jack's the greatest. I'm a freshman. He's a senior."

"I like that, Tiger," Bobby Jones said to him.

"You, Bob May," Ben Hogan began, "you just up and hugged Tiger the minute he defeated you. You cemented a friendship then. You started a new one with all America."

"Thanks, Ben," May replied. "Had I won, a toothless Tiger might have simply licked me like any lapdog. But I would have gotten the real message. It was the next time out with Tiger, I might get another kind of licking like the one I just got." Again, they laughed.

By now, the four had become friends. Team Woods and May beat the other two on the 17th hole. That meant playing the 18th and final hole would just be for fun.

Strangely, arriving at the 18th tee, Bobby Jones and Ben Hogan took their caddies aside. They whispered to them. "What's that all about?" said May to Woods.

Tiger shrugged his shoulders and said, "Beats me."

They found out shortly after reaching their respective tee shots in the middle of the fairway on the last hole's number 18.

"What's cooking?" Bob May asked.

Bobby Jones explained, "We've sent our caddies with our golf bags back to the Club. Turning to Woods's and May's caddies. Jones continued, "You two guys. Just give us your two golf bags you've been carrying for Tiger Woods and Bob May. Ben Hogan and I are going to carry them for Woods and May through the end of this final hole. Don't worry, we'll pay you for the full eighteen holes."

"Why all this?" asked Tiger Woods.

"Because," Ben Hogan answered him. "You beat us. The whole country's proud of you both for the other day. That's how fine you both were. We're your caddies. It's that simple."

Deeply moved, Woods and May were silent right through to the end of play on the 18th green. They didn't dare speak. Ben Hogan and Bobby Jones knew why.

So, they shook hands. Jones and Hogan walked off. Tiger and Bob May turned their backs so no one could see. May pulled out a handkerchief from his pocket. "After you," mumbled Tiger as Bob May finished drying a trickle of tears that were streaming down his cheeks. "Imagine, those two great legendary guys doing all that for us," stammered Tiger. "Bob, your handkerchief please."

Some things make even brave men weep. From high up there, the Great Towncrier said it best for all of us. Smiling down, He called out, "Early afternoon in Louisville, Kentucky, USA and all is well."

And, indeed, it was.

EDWARD PATTERSON • 945 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK, NY 10021

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Faith in Politics

Joseph Lieberman explains himself

By Hillel Fradkin

All Photos: AP / Wide World Photos

Early this spring, Senator Joseph Lieberman—now Democratic vice-presidential candidate Joseph Lieberman—published *In Praise of Public Life*.

The title is something of a misnomer, for the book is in praise not so much of public life as of politics as a career and a profession. Addressed to widespread cynicism about politics (especially among young Americans), the book aims to encourage a more appreciative view of politics' potential "satisfaction," "excitement," and "honor"—a potential he believes can be realized by carrying a strong personal religious faith into the public arena.

But Senator Lieberman's chief praise is reserved for one particular politician's career and religious faithfulness: Senator Joseph Lieberman's. *In Praise of Public Life* is, in short, a campaign autobiography, replete with the usual formal descriptions of its author's positions on various domestic and foreign issues.

And though the book appeared at a curious moment—for the author wasn't, after all, running in the Democratic primaries for president—it proved a successful salvo in the campaign we can now see Lieberman was actually waging: the campaign to become Al Gore's vice-presidential running mate.

This combination of motives—generous and public-spirited on the one hand, ambitious and self-interested on the other—does not embarrass Lieberman. One of his central points is that political ambition is natural, good, and healthy, at least under the right circumstances. With considerable candor, Lieberman reveals the powerful political ambition he found within himself from his earliest youth. It expressed itself through an absorption with impressive contemporary American politicians, beginning with a childhood admiration for Dwight Eisenhower. It was particularly inspired by the campaign of John F. Kennedy and the exciting rhetoric of Kennedy's inaugural address. But it also was, he says, refreshed by the presidency of Ronald Reagan and the "strength, comfort, optimism, and idealism" that Reagan "radiated."

In Praise of Public Life
by Joseph Lieberman
Simon & Schuster, 174 pp., $21

Along the way, it was encouraged by other, less famous political men, such as John Bailey, chairman of both the national and Connecticut Democratic committees and a "consummate political deal-maker," whom Lieberman made the subject of his senior thesis at Yale. Contact with Bailey and other local politicians put Lieberman in touch with people important to launching his political career with a successful race for the Connecticut Senate in 1970, three years after finishing Yale Law School.

Lieberman is clearly a man who has what once was called a political nature and discovered this in himself early. According to Lieberman, this is a blessing not a curse, for both himself and his fellow citizens, since "ambition, when combined with principle, is one of the greatest sources of progress for a society" not only but especially in

Hillel Fradkin, the W.H. Brady fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, is the author of a forthcoming book on the Bible and American liberal democracy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

politics. But in politics, calculation must be joined to this combination—"the challenge is to match your ambition, passion and talent with the right opportunity"—and Lieberman has applied this requirement well. In 1988, when he was Connecticut attorney general, the right opportunity came along in the form of a long-shot race for a Senate seat against the maverick Republican incumbent Lowell Weicker.

This was a good opportunity for a variety of reasons. Weicker's presumed advantage meant that there was little competition for the Democratic nomination. For the same reason, a respectable loss would do him no damage and would, by increasing his name recognition, enhance his prospects to be elected governor of Connecticut, which prior to the Senate campaign had been his next ambition. A win, however implausible (Weicker was ahead by 25 points at the outset of the campaign), would permit Lieberman a leap in his political career and realize his "ultimate ambition," a seat in the United States Senate. In the end he won by a margin of less than 1 percent, aided by an unusual combination of factors: guidance from Stan Greenberg and Carter Eskew (Democratic political consultants later important to the Clinton-Gore campaign), the support of Republicans discontented with Weicker (including William Buckley, the father of modern conservatism and Lieberman's Republican "rabbi," as he puts it), and the votes of traditional Christian, especially Catholic, voters who were impressed by his religious observance of the Jewish Sabbath throughout the campaign.

Reelection in 1994 has now given Lieberman twelve years in the Senate, and once again opportunity has come along. If the Gore-Lieberman ticket should lose, it is unlikely that he will be blamed and he will certainly win reelection to the Senate seat for which he is simultaneously standing.

And, of course, if the ticket should win, he will probably be given a good deal of the credit—which he may well deserve. His place on the ticket, deriving from his reputation for integrity and in particular his conduct in the Monica Lewinsky scandal, may help reassure voters of Vice President Gore's own integrity and focus the campaign away from Bill Clinton and on other matters.

Generally put, Lieberman's answer to the problem of our politics, the problem of ambition and principle, is faith. Elected officials must realize that the core of their relations with the electorate is trust and honesty. Without faithful adherence to that trust, everything else will fall apart. With it, one may even run some political risks by taking positions with which many constituents disagree: Because they trust their representative, they will give him the benefit of some doubts.

Lieberman's In Praise of Public Life *solves the problem of ambition and principle by being so vague about principle.*

But the trust that is required must be broadly construed. Politicians must understand that they are not just citizens but public figures who must lead model lives. They are not permitted, in a manner of speaking, to have private lives, both in principle and now in practice (given the intense scrutiny of the media and their opponents). That is what it means to pursue politics as a "professional," a term of contempt that Lieberman would like to see a term of honor. No doubt this involves a considerable cost to politicians, but there is a reward in the glory from honorable public service. President Clinton's failure to appreciate this ruined his presidency, for him and for us. He broke his trust with the public, first by offering a disgraceful example and then by lying about it.

These were not, according to Lieberman, minor liabilities. America may be amazingly prosperous, strong, and free. Nevertheless, we enjoy these blessings in the midst of a "crumbling moral framework" that diminishes the purpose of such blessings and may eventually undermine them altogether.

"There is," the senator declares, "a swelling sense that much of our culture has become toxic, that our standards of decency and civility are being significantly eroded by the entertainment industry's shameless and pervasive promotion of violence, sex, and vulgarity, and that the traditional sources of values in our society—such as faith, family, and school—are in a life and death struggle with the darker forces of immorality, inhumanity, and greed."

The faithless and sordid behavior of our politicians only contributes to this decay, when they ought to be and are uniquely situated to reverse it. This is why another kind of faith, religious faith, is an important part of the answer to the problem of politics in our time.

In the final and most substantive chapter of *In Praise of Public Life*, Lieberman champions the American religious reawakening he believes to be occurring, and he defends the presence of religion in the 2000 presidential campaign—a presence, already extraordinarily high when his book was published this spring, that has been massively increased by his own nomination. Through religious awakening, our country needs to draw "a political awakening to restore our government's clarity of purpose, its integrity of action and its credibility among the American people." Although the chapter is entitled "The Future," it calls upon us to look to the past, American and biblical (which prove to be more or less harmonious, if not identical).

"Beginning with the founders of our country and the framers of its Constitution, each succeeding generation of Americans that has faced such a time of crisis has turned to God and to America's civil religion for strength and purpose. We are, after all, not just a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nation," but "one nation, under God." Our "core values, expressed in the common principles of our major religions, are in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. They include respect for the dignity of each human life, individual freedom, equal opportunity, tolerance, self-government, limited government, personal and civic responsibility, and a belief in the existence of higher laws of right and wrong that unites us as a people."

This, coming from an American politician, seems strong stuff. But Lieberman has made even stronger remarks since his nomination. In a speech on Sunday, August 27, from the pulpit of the Fellowship Chapel, an African-American church in Detroit, Lieberman told the congregation, "I stand before you today as a witness to the goodness of God," and he declared that "as a people we need to reaffirm our faith." This is not what's typically heard from American Jews, most of whom react to such rhetoric with unease and even hostility.

In the past, Lieberman's talk about religion has provided some cover for his friends on the right. In the present, it provides cover for his friends on the left. Gore was in great need of proof of his own integrity. He has now received it from the only man who could express his views in a compelling religious fashion without seriously upsetting most Jews and most liberal Democrats.

Of course, some protests have been heard: Abraham Foxman of the Anti-Defamation League has written a letter asking Lieberman to stop making "overt expressions" of religious belief. But the widely reported spat with Foxman is one Lieberman is bound to win—and to receive a considerably enhanced public reputation for winning. Moreover, Lieberman's old friends on the right are likely to tread lightly in attacking a man of faith.

But apart from the present utility of Lieberman's political and religious rhetoric, there remains a question: What is the value of his attempted resolution of the problem of ambition and principle? Lieberman's answer is disappointing to many of his past admirers, including me, one of his fellow American Jews.

State Senator Lieberman marches in Hartford in 1978.

The greatest deficiency of *In Praise of Public Life* is its treatment of principle, especially moral and religious principle. Lieberman may be said to solve the problem of ambition by being so vague about principle. To define our moral situation he relies on Alan Wolfe's *One Nation, After All* and its finding that Americans share common values, above all the value of tolerance.

But Lieberman laments Wolfe's further finding (which Wolfe tends to celebrate) that we are "increasingly unwilling to assert long-held communal values and make moral judgments. We confused tolerance and respect for all people with tolerance and acceptance of all behavior. We forgot that some behaviors are simply intolerable."

Lieberman cites three examples: welfare dependency, criminality, and federal deficit spending. And he offers the welfare reform law of 1996, the anti-crime law of 1994, and the budget balancing of 1993 and 1997 (all coincident with the Clinton administration) as examples of our political and moral awakening. But these, if they are indeed signs of "awakening" and not merely an expression of our self-interest, have already been accomplished. What else are we to do—particularly for our children, who are his main concern in our current "crisis"? How are we to support "faith, family, and school" in their "life and death struggle"?

Lieberman seems to have only two proposals. First, traditional piety like his own should be more forthright in proclaiming its principles. It should provide powerful examples of adherence to principle—and to the integrity, and honesty of which we have great need. Second, we must fight to overcome the great obstacles to the edifying effect of such examples—in particular, the competition of the entertainment and news industries for the hearts and minds of our children. Of the two, it would seem that the first is the more crucial. After all, as Lieberman observes, entertainment and news

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

take their bearings by the market. If people of faith set a powerful example they would alter that market.

This is, as Lieberman had insisted with regard to President Clinton, especially true of public officials. Lieberman's argument, for both his position and himself as a candidate, ultimately turns on his own personal example. How has religious faith and principle informed his public life? How has it set an example which addresses the crisis we face and our need for renewed dedication to principle, for integrity?

Senator Lieberman is best known for his orthodox observance of the Jewish Sabbath. In this he does indeed provide an example of adherence to a principle that involves some inconveniences and therefore requires the self-restraint he calls on others to practice. But he has relatively little to say about his observance, and much of what he does say defines it as his form of relaxation, different from other forms of leisure but not in any way intrinsically superior.

Only once does he speak of it as the Jewish means of expressing appreciation of God's Creation and gratitude and honor to Him for it. Of course, gratitude of any sort as well as a serious weekly respite from our otherwise restless lives cuts against the grain of many contemporary American tendencies that Lieberman decries. So one would think that the subject of Sabbath observance would be an ideal opportunity to instruct his fellow American Jews, as well as other Americans, about the meaning of faith and its potential benefit for public life. But Lieberman forgoes this chance.

One might suppose his silence means that he believes the impact of religious faith upon political life in a liberal democracy should only be indirect and that religious principles cannot be directly applied to public life. But such is not the case. It is rather that in speaking of his Jewish principles and their relation to public life, he prefers to lavish emphasis on the Hebrew phrase *tikkun olam*, which means repair or reform of the world—and his treatment of this subject creates an important difficulty for his ostensible enterprise on behalf of religious faith.

The term *tikkun olam* has a respectable and important place in ancient Jewish tradition, especially the mystical tradition, where it is particularly associated with heightened devotion to prayer and other ritual observances. But as Lieberman knows, for the last thirty years *tikkun olam* has

become ubiquitous in American Jewish life, where it is used to express not traditional piety but social and political activism.

The term has effectively become the vehicle by which contemporary, secular, and largely liberal pieties have come to define much of American Judaism. Most important for Lieberman's enterprise, *tikkun olam* is typically an expression of that tolerant but non-judgmental moral posture that he declares the core of our problem. (On August 29, Senator Lieberman's wife Hadassah told B'nai B'rith that the "ultimate purpose" of the Gore-Lieberman ticket is "*tikkun olam*, the repair of the world.")

No doubt in Lieberman's case, a devotion to social reform flows from traditional piety and is conditioned by its relation to other religious principles. But for his example to be of use, he would need to take on the hard task of explaining, to both American Jews and gentiles, these religious principles and the stern integrity that he claims is part of the blessing they could provide.

And this is exactly what he does not do. Instead, both in his book and since its publication, he has been silent about, downplayed, or simply abandoned the actual positions that once seemed to be connected to his religious views.

For this version of *tikkun*, we don't need traditional piety; we need only the Democratic party platform. What importance does that leave to his vision of the role of religious faith? And what is left of the political faith or trust—"the integrity of action and its credibility among the American people"—upon which he so much insists?

In some cases, like Social Security, Lieberman has said that on closer study he changed his mind. In other cases, like experimental voucher programs, he has stated that he has not necessarily changed his views. If elected, he may continue to argue privately on their behalf with President Gore, but Gore's ultimate decision will then as now have his public support.

On affirmative action, Lieberman's behavior is even more troubling. It is an issue that bears directly on what Lieberman has termed the fundamental principle of both America and his own faith, a view he reiterated both in his speech in Detroit and at an interfaith prayer breakfast in Chicago the following day. Americans are, he said, "children of an awesome God," equally made in His image. Without faith in that principle, neither the Declaration of Independence nor the Constitution "could have been written."

Lieberman's own dedication to that principle and the injustice of segregation led him, while a student at Yale, to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

march with Martin Luther King Jr. in Washington in the summer of 1963 and, courageously, to register black voters in Mississippi.

Apparently the same dedication led him years later to oppose at least some forms of affirmative action on the ground that they violated "a basic principle of American life." This too required a bit of courage in the face of a protest rally mounted against him at Yale in 1995 by Jesse Jackson, Patricia Ireland, and others.

It is thus that perhaps no other issue is more important for the explanation of Lieberman's faith and principles. And his appearance in Detroit at the Fellowship Chapel provided a perfect opportunity for Lieberman to offer an example of a politician holding to his religiously informed principles in a difficult political situation. But that Lieberman did not do. Rather, only a few days before, he had declared, "I have supported affirmative action, I do support affirmative action, and I will support affirmative action." In so doing he diminished not only his "basic principles" but the dignified integrity that he has proclaimed his touchstone.

It can be said that this is no more than politics as usual. But what Lieberman has been promoting is *unusual* politics—a politics of integrity and religious faith. Thus far in Lieberman's campaign, including his campaign autobiography *In Praise of Public Life*, we have had instruction in ambition and political calculation. But what of honorable ambition grounded and guided by religious faith? What has become of that? At this point, all that seems to remain is religious rhetoric. ♦

Banning Flannery

Down and out in Louisiana.

BY ROD DREHER

The Catholic Church teaches that our moral and intellectual failures may sometimes be excused by something it calls "invincible ignorance"—an absolute incapacity to understand that what we're doing is wrong. The plea of invincible ignorance seems just about the only hope for Catholic parents in a southern Louisiana town who succeeded this summer in banning from a local Catholic high school the work of the woman widely held to be the greatest Catholic fiction writer of twentieth-century America.

But for their bishop, the head of the Diocese of Lafayette, who set aside common sense, basic fairness, and intellectual integrity to crumble to the parents' bullying—well, in his case it looks more like willful ignorance, and that leaves him with a whole lot of explaining to do. Thanks to Bishop Edward J. O'Donnell's abject surrender to the forces of political correctness, a southern Catholic school—Opelousas Catholic High—has the dubious distinction of being the first recorded school in America to ban the southern Catholic writer Flannery O'Connor.

In fact, the bishop's edict goes further. The parents of black students at Opelousas Catholic had demanded that O'Connor's collection of stories, *A Good Man Is Hard to Find*, be removed from reading lists because it contains characters who use the words "nigger" and "pickaninny." And Bishop O'Donnell, in ordering the elimination of O'Connor's volume, directed that "no similar books" replace it: All books containing those racial epithets are forbidden, regardless of context.

Mark Twain? Gone. William Faulkner? A dead letter. Black authors Ralph Ellison, Toni Morrison, James Baldwin, even local writer Ernest J. Gaines? Banished without reprieve.

"Basically, anything that has to do with race is off-limits," said Arsenio Orteza, the teacher whose assigning of O'Connor to his eleventh-graders sparked the furor. "Think of how much American literature that leaves out. Maybe *The Scarlet Letter* is the way to go, and I'll have to hope there aren't any adulterers who object in the community."

How did an ill-informed but insistent minority manage to impose its bumptious will on an entire school—with the chancery's backing? It started earlier this summer, when Orteza, a high-school literature teacher with thirteen years of classroom experience, was hired by Opelousas Catholic.

The school asked him to give a summer reading list to his incoming juniors. He assigned *How to Read a Book*, by Mortimer Adler and Charles Van Doren, O'Connor's *A Good Man Is Hard to Find*, and the King James Version of the Bible.

A group of parents immediately complained that Catholic students ought not to be using a Protestant Bible—and the response forms an interesting contrast. Orteza explained to his superiors that he had assigned the King James Bible primarily for its literary importance: the translation that inspired the vast bulk of English and American literature. Opelousas Catholic's chancellor undertook to explain to the complaining parents in great detail why they were wrong, and the parents backed down.

But then, two weeks before school started, several black parents approached Fr. Malcolm O'Leary, a black priest affiliated with the school, charging that their children were being forced to read the racist work of Flannery O'Connor. The parents objected to both the title story, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," and a story called "The Artificial Nigger," which O'Connor considered the finest thing she ever wrote. Both stories are set in the Jim Crow South and feature white bigots as protagonists. In these

Rod Dreher is a columnist for the New York Post *and film critic of* Our Sunday Visitor.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stories, the author, a white woman who lived in rural Georgia until her death from lupus in 1964 at age thirty-nine, exposes and condemns the hellish pride that leads these characters to dismiss black people as "niggers" and "pickaninnies." "The Artificial Nigger" in particular offers a psychologically penetrating portrait of cracker racism as a projection of the fear of impotence in the face of the unknown.

"Essentially, O'Connor is not about race at all, which is why it is so refreshing, coming, as it does, out of such a racial culture," the black novelist Alice Walker once wrote about O'Connor. "If it can be said to be 'about' anything, then it is 'about' prophets and prophecy, 'about' revelation, and 'about' the impact of supernatural grace on human beings who don't have a chance of spiritual growth without it."

Prime stuff, you would think, for study in a Catholic high school in the Deep South. But Father O'Leary says neither he nor, to the best of his knowledge, any of the parents have read O'Connor's stories—which doesn't bother him. Indeed, O'Leary says, he didn't invite the teacher to meet with the parents "because they would have been at his throat if he had been in the room. It was for his own safety."

You might suppose that the first duty of a Catholic priest—faced with parishioners ready to commit physical violence against a teacher for assigning a book—would be to engage in a little moral instruction. But Father O'Leary's response was instead to lead the wild-eyed band into Bishop O'Donnell's office to demand action. The scene must have been worthy of Tom Wolfe (another writer whose novels now can't be taught at Opelousas Catholic).

The school, the delegation told the bishop, is a tinderbox of racial animus. These unspeakable stories with those . . . those . . . *words* might encourage a racist white child to insult a black child, who would strike back, and then . . . well, Armageddon. According to delegation member Patrick Fontenot (a community leader who removed his youngest children from Opelousas Catholic years ago), O'Leary told the bishop that he "shouldn't wait for a black child to be killed" before he took action.

Bishop O'Donnell, who says that he has read O'Connor, is reported to have told the group that O'Connor was no racist and the stories in question are

AP / Wide World Photos

Flannery O'Connor in 1962

actually anti-racist. He asked how the group would react if they were to learn that O'Connor's work is taught at Xavier, Grambling, Southern, and other black Louisiana universities.

"That was the wrong thing to ask. They got even more upset," said Reginald Tatum, a black school board member who was present. Fontenot informed the bishop he did not want to be "patronized." Later, Fontenot said, "I had read about this bishop right after he came here, about how he was all for civil rights, how he had marched with King, and I had a good opinion of him. But when I sat with him for that hour the other day, and saw the demeanor with which he tried to placate us, I saw that he was the same as all the others. It was all 'You black folks are too sensitive, you're going overboard.'"

Well, mightn't the bishop have had a point? None of them had read the book they wanted banned, after all. "Why is it that black people are always the ones who have to back down?" Fontenot replied testily.

Ah, so that's it: power, respect, saving face, standing up to the Man. No wonder Tatum observed later, "This is not about Flannery O'Connor. This is about racial tension."

And once the question had shifted from literature to the bishop's racial credentials, there was really only one answer. "The Diocese of Lafayette is a fabulous mixture of races, nationalities and ethnic groups," its website declares. "We celebrate our diversity; we celebrate in unity." These days, whenever you run across cant like that, you can be reasonably sure that somebody is up to no good. Days later, Fr. O'Leary received the letter from his ordinary that he wanted.

"No one can tell another person whether or not he or she should be offended," the bishop wrote. "That is simply a matter of fact and should be respected in so far as is possible. For that reason, I direct that the books in question should be removed from the reading list immediately and other readings substituted for them."

In the wake of the bishop's epistle, Father O'Leary has set himself up as the arbiter of racial correctness for the school's literature courses. It is he who decreed that no book stained by the n-word may ever be taught: *Lafayette est locuta; causa finita est.*

"Flannery could have made a funny story out of this herself," said William Sessions, a retired English professor and a close personal friend of O'Connor's. "This kind of reality is what she dealt with in her work. Flannery developed a view of people who were all suffering, all corrupt, all subject to misunderstandings. But these are not stories with happy endings." ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Chuck Berry in 1959. Bettmann / CORBIS

Present at the Creation

How the Chess brothers invented rock 'n' roll.

BY DANIEL WATTENBERG

Chess Records released its first record fifty years ago. And while the legendary Chicago label achieved its greatest success in the supposedly somnolent decade of the 1950s, the popular music of the 1960s is almost inconceivable without Chess. For without the recordings of Chess artists—bluesmen Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf, and proto-rockers Chuck Berry and Bo Diddley—who would the Rolling Stones and dozens of other pop groups have stolen from?

In her new book *Spinning Blues Into Gold*, Nadine Cohodas tells the story of brothers Leonard and Phil Chess, immigrant Jews from Poland, and the record company they built.

Spinning Blues Into Gold
The Chess Brothers and the Legendary Chess Records
by Nadine Cohodas
St. Martin's, 358 pp., $25.95

Daniel Wattenberg is a writer living in Washington, D.C.

Inevitably, Cohodas covers some familiar ground. Who is not familiar with the story of how the acoustic Delta blues went electric after migrating to the industrial north? Or how the rise of rock 'n' roll swept aside racial barriers in popular music and, incidentally, relegated the blues to a vernacular corner of the record business?

But to this familiar material, Cohodas brings a fresh perspective. Her book is the story of the mid-century revolution in American popular music from the vantage point of the much maligned label owners: road-weary white entrepreneurs like the Chess brothers, with soup stains on their neckties and coffee rings on their copies of *Cash Box*.

The pragmatic, unglamorous (mostly Jewish) independent label owners of the time have not fared well in the histories. They have been depicted typically as cunning parasites who cheated artists of royalties—when, that is, they weren't diluting the artistry of these natural geniuses in the crass pursuit of profits. The period did have its share of scoundrels (Morris Levy of Roulette Records and Nat Tarnopol of Brunswick Records come to mind). But more typical, one suspects, were men like Leonard Chess. In his famous attack on rock 'n' roll in *The Closing of the American Mind*, Alan Bloom asserted that the Left had hypocritically exempted rock from its otherwise comprehensive indictment of "late capitalism." In fact, a belief in exploitative label owners has long been axiomatic. Under the sway of this dogma, wide credence was given to crackpot legends such as Rolling Stone Keith Richards's baseless claim that on a visit to the Chess studio he saw Muddy Waters perched on a stepladder in workman's overalls painting the ceiling.

Yes, Leonard Chess was a driven, unsentimental, penny-pinching philistine, goading and autocratic. But he was loyal to his musicians, a loyalty approaching familial tenderness toward the artists who carried the company in its heyday. He was honest—as he had to be, for a businessman working in a small and insular profession depended on mutual trust. In a nation still marked by segregation, he mixed easily with black artists and DJs, placed blacks in positions of authority in his company, and donated sizable sums to the black community in which he made his money.

Did he equitably share the proceeds with his artists? The relevant paper trail has long since vanished, but it is worth remembering an often overlooked fact of the record business. Records made artists into stars, and while the label made money off the records they released, it made none from concerts, club dates, and other venues of popular music stardom.

Bo Diddley, for example, appeared in the "Bo Knows" television ad campaign as late as the mid-1980s. But had it not been for Leonard Chess, Bo Diddley might still have been known by his real name of Ellas McDaniel, and his first hit would have been called not "Bo Diddley," but "Uncle John." And it is cer-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tain that "Uncle John" would not have received the airplay that lifted it onto the charts in 1955, had Chess not instructed McDaniel to clean up the original lyrics: "Uncle John got corn ain't never been shucked / Uncle John got daughters ain't never been . . . to school."

Leonard and Phil Chess were born Lejzor and Fiszel Czyz in Motele, a desolate Jewish town in Poland. Leonard, the flinty and professionally dominant brother, was born in 1917. Phil, the more personable one, was born in 1921. With their mother and sister, they emigrated to America in 1928 to join their father, who had arrived in Chicago several years before.

The Chess catalogue is now a small part of a French company, Vivendi-Universal, which recently swallowed Edgar Bronfman's booze and entertainment conglomerate, Seagram. Chess, too, had its origins in booze and entertainment, on Chicago's South Side. Chicago's black population surged from 278,000 to 492,000 in the 1940s, as sharecroppers made expendable by the mechanization of cotton harvesting fled north seeking work. They poured into the South Side, where Leonard Chess operated two liquor stores (whose jukeboxes attracted musicians) before buying a restaurant called the Congress Buffet in 1946. He installed a bar and booths and gave it a saucier name: the Macomba Lounge.

The Macomba Lounge featured live jazz, not the rougher blues which would become synonymous with Chess. Attracted by the quality of the music, musicians from neighboring clubs would converge on the Macomba after their own gigs to join all-night jam sessions. The Macomba was also a magnet for whores and drug dealers. Leonard carried a .44 pistol, which, he explained to his son, wasn't much use if it wasn't conspicuously displayed on his person.

The popularity of live music on the South Side, the abundant musical talent, and the growing prominence of black radio combined to suggest to Leonard commercial possibilities. When an acquaintance, Evelyn Aron, started Aristocrat Records (to record jazz, like the kind booked at the Macomba), Leonard saw his opportunity and joined the fledgling label's sales staff in October 1947. The enterprising Leonard soon became Aron's partner, and in December 1949 he bought her out to take over the company, which he renamed at the suggestion of Memphis record distributor Buster Williams.

One day in 1947, McKinley Morganfield, a Delta blues guitarist who had arrived in Chicago in 1943, fibbed to his boss to get off early from his job delivering venetian blinds. He had been invited to join his friend, veteran Delta blues pianist Sunnyland Slim, on a recording session at Aristocrat. Morganfield,

St. Martin's Press

known since his Mississippi childhood as Muddy Waters, took advantage of some unused time to record his own single. That first recording drew little notice on release, but his second would be historic, in the view of students of the blues. (The genre has no fans, only "students," many of whom, especially the ones from places like Holland, find themselves compelled to film documentaries on the subject.)

For a company still specializing in silky, citified swing, Waters's swampy slide guitar and vocals took some getting used to. "What's he saying?" demanded a skeptical Leonard Chess at one early session. But Waters's second Aristocrat session produced a two-sided hit, "I Feel Like Going Home" and "I Can't Be Satisfied" (later recorded by the Rolling Stones) that made *Billboard*'s R&B chart, the label's first hit. Waters would go on to chart nine songs over the next few years, peaking in 1954 with two Willie Dixon songs, "I Just Want to Make Love to You" (another early Rolling Stones hit) and the classic "Hoochie Coochie Man." In Waters's wake, Chess shifted its emphasis. The rough-hewn Chicago blues found a ready market among nostalgic migrants from the Delta, and Chess became the only blues label that mattered in the only city that mattered for the blues.

At the beginning of the 1950s the Chess brothers (the Macomba had by then burned down, and Phil had joined the record company full-time) enjoyed a brief but fruitful collaboration with Memphis record-producer Sam Phillips, an ardent and rare white champion of unrefined country blues. One of the Phillips-produced songs the brothers acquired was "Rocket 88," sung by Jackie Brenston. Written by Ike Turner, the song is widely cited as the first rock 'n' roll number. It is not clear why this piano-based boogie-woogie number merits the designation, even if it is about a car. In any case, it became, in May 1951, the first Chess release to reach number one on the R&B charts.

Musician, composer, and talent scout, the young Ike Turner was a ubiquitous figure in the early 1950s, long before attaining notoriety for his substance abuse and violence against women (both, be it noted, recurring themes in the R&B songs of that era). In addition to his role in "Rocket 88," the pre-Tina Ike brought in the blues singer Chester Burnett, a large and moody man who sang like he was "gargling with Drano." Phillips sold the resulting single—"Moanin' at Midnight" and "How Many More Years"—to Chess, and after both sides made the R&B charts, the Chesses wrested control of the singer from a rival label. As Howlin' Wolf, Burnett would go on to vie with Waters for preeminence through the remainder of their careers, recording "Smokestack Lightning" and "Little

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Above, Howlin' Wolf in the 1960s. Opposite, Muddy Waters in 1963.

Red Rooster" (a number one hit for—sense a pattern?—the Rolling Stones), among other recognized standards.

The Chess brothers fell out with Phillips in 1952 over who had to foot the bill for the bus in which Jackie Brenston had toured. They should have paid, because just two years later Phillips would find the elusive "white man who sang like a black man," Elvis Presley. The brothers would chide themselves in later years that they might have had Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis, and the other Phillips stars. It was not their only near-miss. In the late 1950s, Leonard sent a contract to a dynamic young R&B shouter in Macon, Georgia, but bad weather in Chicago prevented him from flying down to close the deal before a representative of Syd Nathan's King Records beat him to the punch. The young soul singer, James Brown, would dominate black music in the 1960s and 1970s. If Chess had ended up with Elvis Presley and James Brown, then perhaps Chess, not the French, would be swallowing Edgar Bronfman's entertainment empire.

But if the king of rock 'n' roll and the godfather of soul eluded their grasp, Bo Diddley and Chuck Berry were nothing to sneeze at. The underage Diddley used to sneak into clubs to watch Muddy Waters—careful always to sit near an exit, should he need to flee the manager. Like many blues musicians, he got his start busking for change on Chicago's Maxwell Street. He was a tinkerer, building his own guitars (his squared off guitar bodies would become a trademark) and amplifiers. By the time he had added rattling maracas, syncopated tom-tom rhythms, tremulous guitar, and slyly funny, self-dramatizing lyrics to his sound, it didn't sound like blues anymore—or like anything else being recorded at the time. His first single, "Bo Diddley" and "I'm a Man," was released in 1955 and reached number one and two on the *Billboard* retail and jukebox charts.

Bo Diddley also made *Billboard*'s new R&B radio chart, which tallied the airplay that records received. The new chart reflected the transformation of the pop-music market in 1954. That was the year that disc jockey Alan Freed came to WINS in New York. He expanded the market for black R&B to white teenagers and in the process contributed to a 42 percent jump in his station's ad sales. The term "rock 'n' roll," popularized by Freed, entered the lexicon, helping to dissolve the taboo that had previously limited the racially connotative "R&B."

And, perhaps most important, 1954 was also the year that Elvis Presley recorded an accelerated version of an old country blues song, "That's Alright, Mama," for Sam Phillips. Presley's astonishing string of hits in the next few years broke sales records across racial and demographic lines. The single with "Hound Dog" and "Don't Be Cruel" went to number one on the pop chart, the R&B chart, and the country chart. In Presley's wake, musical styles converged, spawning hybrid forms like rockabilly, and niche markets expanded into mass markets.

Few artists better personified the new confluence than Chess's Chuck Berry. "Maybellene," Berry's first single for the label, was released forty-five years ago on July 30. A skilled blues guitarist, he had been steered to Chess by Muddy Waters, whom he had approached at a Chicago club date on a visit from his native St. Louis. But Berry had also left club audiences back home marveling at the "black hillbilly" with a flair for showmanship.

"Maybellene" was originally a hillbilly song called "Ida Red." (Because there was an existing song of the same name, Leonard renamed it after his gaze fell on a secretary's make-up box.) While the recorded song retains underlying traces of country (especially in the alternating harmonic fourths plucked on the guitar), it unites, probably for the first time,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

all the main elements of what would come to be recognized as rock 'n' roll.

Compared with the era's prevailing R&B sound, guitar and piano exchange places: Instead of hammered piano chords with a soft trimming of electric guitar in the background, "Maybellene" ornaments its driving guitar foundation with soft piano runs. A big snare drum backbeat replaces the ricky-ticky milk carton sound of the early Sun records of Presley, Carl Perkins, and Johnny Cash. (Leonard's repetitive demands for louder drum beats were a source of running amusement at the label.) Berry's guitar solo is the prototype for the innumerable solos that would echo through rock clubs and family garages in the decades that followed. And of course the lyric addressed rock 'n' roll's twin preoccupations, cars and babes: "As I was motorvatin' over the hill / I saw Maybellene in a Coupe de Ville."

Maybellene motorvated to the top of all three of *Billboard*'s R&B charts. And like Elvis, Berry crossed the color barrier (from the opposite direction), reaching number four on the pop sales chart. Berry became a one-man hit factory for Chess, charting seven singles in a row. "School Day" in 1957 would duplicate the feat of "Maybellene," hitting number one on all three R&B charts. His songs would often vie with Presley's on the R&B charts, while lagging a little behind on the pop charts.

Even some that weren't hits on original release would later become standards, like his "Roll Over Beethoven," a hit for the Beatles. Wry and ringing at the same time, "Sweet Little Sixteen," "Johnny B. Goode," and "Too Much Monkey Business" became rock 'n' roll's most covered and imitated songs (not least by the frequently self-recycling Berry himself).

John, Paul, George, and Ringo properly credited Berry for "Roll Over, Beethoven." On "Maybellene," however, Leonard and Phil had not. Anyone examining the original sheet music for "Maybellene" would have noticed the names Russ Fratto and Alan Freed alongside Berry's as composers. Fratto was a printer who owned the building

4858 South Cottage Grove, the home of Chess Records from 1951 to 1954.

that housed the Chess studios. The unmusical landlord was credited with an impressive twelve songs in the era. (Cohodas gingerly raises the question of whether the Chicago landlord had ties to organized crime, only to leave it, perhaps wisely, unanswered.) Freed, the wildly popular disc jockey, had twenty-eight song credits to his name.

Payola was standard industry practice, and label operators made little effort to conceal it. Indeed, the Chesses often listed payments to important DJs as deductible business expenses on their tax returns. They viewed these payments—checks, sweetheart loans, Baccarat crystal, cars, and writing credits—as the inevitable cost of getting their records on the air.

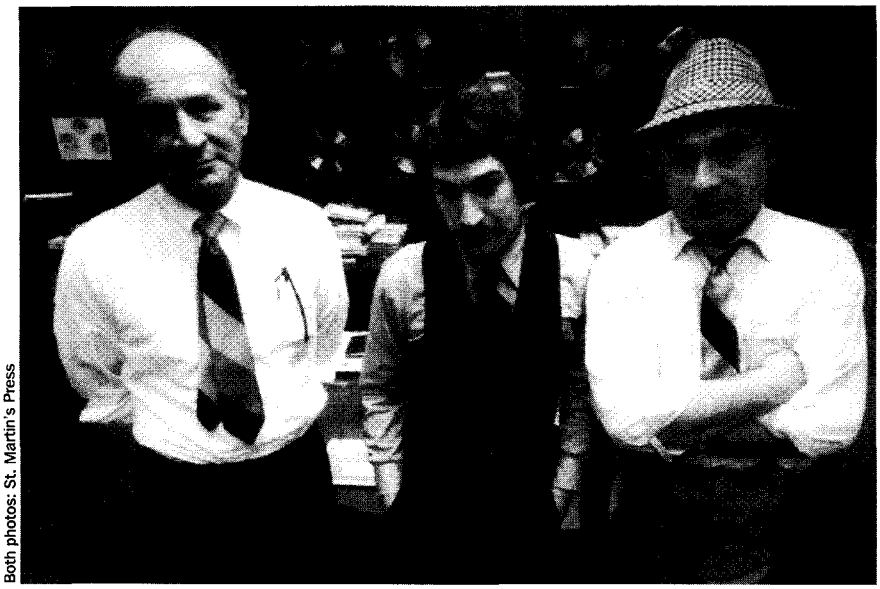
While payola might have been an inevitable—and defensible—cost in the context of the time, this shifting of that cost is indefensible. It is not clear Cohodas grasps the distinction. Acknowledging that money was diverted, she writes: "In the case of 'Maybellene,' the money was not diverted from Berry into [Leonard's] pocket or Phil's." Oh, really? The brothers held that keeping Freed greased was a kind of fixed cost. By diverting a portion of Berry's composer royalties to Freed, the brothers were shifting that cost from the Chess corporation to Berry, a contract artist. The diverted royalties were indeed going into the brothers' pockets—as surely as if they had written Freed a check directly against corporate funds and then withheld royalty payments to Berry to reimburse themselves.

Still, Cohodas's larger point holds: If the Chess brothers had been the greedy fast-buck artists of popular stereotype, they never would have entered this arena when they did. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the costs of the rhythm and blues record business were steep and the long-term prospects uncertain.

For starters, the market was small. Sales of forty thousand copies were generally sufficient to put a record on the R&B charts. Sales of eighty thousand were considered huge. Black radio stations numbered no more than a handful. Record distribution was effectively segregated—distributors of pop records aimed at white audiences generally declined to carry rhythm and blues. As late as 1953, R&B represented less than 6 percent of record sales.

Like many of its competitors, Chess was often caught in a cash squeeze of front-end costs and back-end revenues: While record pressers demanded payment up front, distributors typically paid only for records they sold, returning unsold records to the label. Much of the pressing was handled by the major record companies' plants, which pressed outside orders only after first pressing

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Both photos: St. Martin's Press

Leonard and Phil Chess flank Leonard's son Marshall at the Chess Records offices, 1969.

their own. In a market where demand was fleeting, these production delays could be deadly. (Cincinnati independent King Records resorted to sending its tapes to a school for the blind in Kentucky; unfortunately, according to one King producer, the records sounded as though they had been manufactured at a school for the deaf.)

Throughout the early years of the label, Leonard and Phil were on the road virtually year-round. It is not overstating things to say that they were piecing together a national marketing and distribution network for their records one city at a time. Leaving aside "Maybellene," little in the brothers' conduct suggests that they viewed songwriting royalties as a means of getting rich at the expense of their artists. In fact, until well into the history of the company, they were blind to the value of song publishing.

Publishing companies obtain copyrights and register them with one of the monitoring associations that channel payments for live performance and radio play. (For Chess, it was usually BMI, which was created in 1940 in part to protect black composers who had been ignored by ASCAP.) Once copyrighted, songs are marketed to other performers and "mechanical royalties" (two cents per record sold, divided equally between publisher and composer) are collected. For years, Leonard brushed aside suggestions that he create a song publishing company for Chess material. "I can't be bothered with that," he told Atlantic's Jerry Wexler. Only in August 1953 did Leonard relent, when outsiders Gene and Harry Goodman (brothers of swing giant Benny, to those looking for a convenient symbol of the shifting tide in American popular music) came to him with their own proposal. If Leonard had imagined that publishing royalties would make an important profit, it seems unlikely he would have agreed to cut the Goodmans in as partners in the new Chess publishing arm, Arc Music. In Leonard's view, Chess was in the record business and only incidentally in the song business.

Only in 1956 did this view begin to change. That year, Chess released "See You Later, Alligator," written and performed by Bobby Charles. Its sales were unspectacular, but shortly after, Decca released a cover version by Bill Haley, which sold a million copies. The "mechanicals" amounted to $20,000, to be split between Arc and Charles.

Today, the era's covers of black R&B songs by popular white artists on major labels carry a sour taste of exploitation. It is true that these vanilla versions were generally inferior to the originals—think Pat Boone, singing Little Richard's "Tutti-Frutti." But if they were an offense against American ears, they were on balance a boon, yielding royalties to both the smallish labels that produced for the black market and the mostly black composers. One category of professionals, it is true, was harmed by the practice: the non-composing performers on the original releases. Their recordings often had little time to catch on before facing better-promoted versions by bigger names. But even this injury has been alleviated, as oldies radio stations and reissue labels prefer original recordings to saccharine covers.

Overseas licensing of the Chess material was little more than an afterthought in the 1950s. But it was the brothers' British licensing arrangements with Decca and then Pye that introduced the records of Waters, Berry, and Howlin' Wolf to such young British enthusiasts as Mick Jagger and Keith Richards. And it was these later cover versions—by the Rolling Stones, the Animals, the Yardbirds, and other blues-influenced British Invasion bands—that unlocked the value of the Arc catalogue.

So, much of the Rolling Stones' source music was created at the Chess studios in Chicago by upwardly pushing immigrants who bet that making records for an underserved black market could lift them into affluence in one generation. Has anything done more to accelerate black embourgoisement than the billions of dollars generated by the recording industry's discovery of the blues and its offshoots?

Now, half a century later, some still claim that rock poses a threat to the survival of liberal society. On the other hand, it has been argued, with some exaggeration, that rock's expressive individualism helped dissolve the totalitarian regimes of the old Soviet bloc. In any case, it is clear that rock has been easily absorbed by the capitalist order and turned to its own purposes, used to sell everything from cars to software. And yet, attacks on rock from the cultural right have persisted. One wonders: Do conservative critics have difficulty accepting rock because it threatens the liberal order? Or do they instead have difficulty accepting a liberal order that permits rock? ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRUDGE REPORT

XXXXX DRUDGE REPORT XXXXX WED OCT 25, 2000 11:04:27 ET XXXXX

UPDATE: BUSH CAPTURED ON HIDDEN VIDEO AT 1994 GRADUATION TELLING STUDENTS, "YOU GO OUT AND MAKE THE MOST OF LIFE!"

X X X X X

WISE COUNSEL? OR AN INCITEMENT TO LAWBREAKING OCCASIONED BY A RELAPSE INTO DRUG-TAKING IRRESPONSIBILITY AND SEXUAL DEBAUCH?

X X X X X

As a followup to the DRUDGE REPORT's **exclusive, first-in-the-world mention** that George W. Bush -- six years after he supposedly gave up **alcohol** -- appeared on video at a Texas wedding and laughed and referred to the groom as a "nice fella," we can now reveal that a similar incident occurred in 1994. Addressing graduating seniors at Texas A&M, Bush urged them to "drink life to the lees."

In the video, his thoughts appear to **ramble**. Bush wishes the students luck, and expresses his wish that they find jobs in mathematics, accounting, "or *whatever you majored in*."

At one point he **maybe laughs**, although many observers (Me, Myself, and I) remarked that there's **not much funny** about a college graduation.

At times, Bush appears to **squint**. Staring into the sun? Or fighting off hallucinations caused by a combination of LSD, Humboldt County sensemilla, and aftershave that the **poor deranged bastard** couldn't keep his paws off when he saw it in the medicine cabinet this morning? All we know is that **some say** (some who've drifted into our home office this morning) that Bush **blinks** several times in the course of the video and reaches frequently to **drink from a glass** of what university authorities claim was ice water. Judge for yourself.

In closing, Bush says, "Hitch your wagon to a star." A reference to falling **off the wagon**?

the weekly Standard
September 11, 2000

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Teachers Unions and the Prospects for Better Schools

Terry M. Moe is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and a professor of political science at Stanford University.

Anyone who wants to improve our nation's schools would be wise to ponder a basic fact: that the **teachers unions have more influence on the public schools than any other groups in American society.**

The unions shape the schools from the bottom up, through collective bargaining. These activities are so broad in scope, and lead to contract rules so numerous and restrictive, that virtually everything about the organization of schools is affected. The unions also shape the schools from the top down, through political action. Their massive memberships and awesome resources give them unrivaled power in the politics of education, allowing them to affect which policies are imposed on the schools by government—and to block reforms they don't like.

Despite their importance, the unions have not been on reformers' radar screens. In the hundreds of official reports on school reform published over the last few decades, they have almost always been ignored, as though they are irrelevant to an assessment of problems and solutions.

This is an unfortunate state of affairs. It is especially troubling because union interests are often in conflict with the public interest. The unions are fundamentally concerned with promoting the job security and material well-being of their members, and with increasing the size, financial strength, and power of their own organizations—and these interests can lead them to exercise power in ways that are not good for kids and schools.

The unions push for rules that make it impossible to get rid of bad or mediocre teachers. They push for salary, promotion, and transfer policies that rely heavily on seniority, and have nothing to do with teacher quality. They resist efforts to evaluate teacher performance, and even oppose testing current teachers to see if they are competent enough to be in the classroom.

These examples are just the tip of a large and threatening iceberg. Because of the unions, schools have grown bureaucratic and inflexible. And because of the unions, efforts to create a more dynamic and responsive system—mainly through proposals for school choice—have been sabotaged in politics, despite their popularity with parents.

If real reform is ever to come to American education, our leaders must face up to the teachers unions and do what is best for kids and schools. The catch is that many leaders are unwilling to do this—for the unions' power is very real. Indeed, they have colonized the Democratic Party, whose officeholders and candidates almost never take positions on education that conflict with union interests.

So Americans who want better schools shouldn't hold their breath. In the near term, especially if the Democrats do well in the coming election, the teachers unions will remain firmly in the driver's seat—making sure that we don't actually go anywhere.

Progress will not come easy. But the more Americans are aware of what the teachers unions are doing, the more likely the unions and their political allies will be held to account. And the more likely things will finally change.

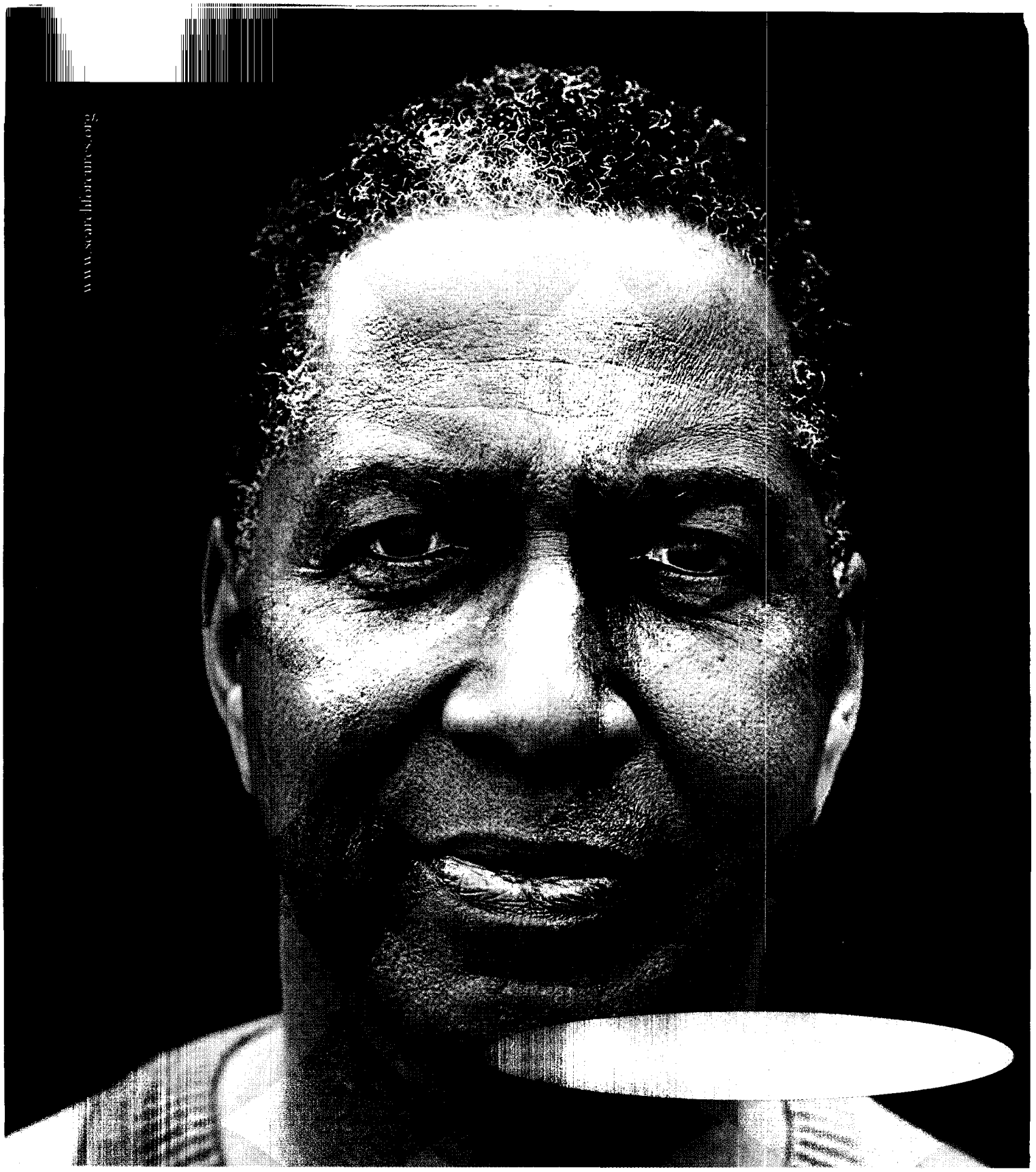
— Terry M. Moe

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

Interested in more commentary on public policy?

Visit us on-line at **www.hoover.org** *or contact us to receive a complimentary copy of the 200-page, award-winning* **Hoover Digest.**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



www.searchforcures.org

It's the face of Jim Williams. A father and a pilot, he has been in remission from prostate cancer for over eight years. As someone who did two combat tours in Vietnam, he knows war. Still, he considers prostate cancer his ultimate battle. Jim relies on new medicines from America's pharmaceutical companies. They're a major reason why he's in remission. Even though more people are surviving prostate cancer than ever before, pharmaceutical company researchers won't give up until there is a cure. Their relentless search allows people like Jim to face a future filled with hope.

America's Pharmaceutical Companies

Leading the way in the search for cures

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED